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1883

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THE  
SPIRIT  
OF  
HEBREW POETRY

BY J. G. HERDER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,  
BY JAMES MARSH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.  
VOL. II.

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## TO THE READER.

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In entering upon this second portion of the work, I would repeat the wishes which I expressed in the preface to the former, and shall only add here such remarks as apply peculiarly to the present volume.

The form of dialogue employed in the introduction is dropped here, because, in treating matters of the kind here presented, it would only have been burthensome, and have weakened the impression intended to be produced. The reader is supposed rather to be seated in familiar discussion with the author or with himself, and in adopting this supposition he will find the progress and development of the ideas the more natural and agreeable. Where the divisions prove too long, he will find convenient resting places at shorter intervals, in which he may stop and reflect upon what he has already passed over.

I cannot, from the nature of the case, anticipate a universal agreement in opinion upon all the matters here treated of, and the results of some of the enquiries instituted, are perhaps too strange and foreign from received opinions, to gain the assent of the public at once. But what is not done to-day may be done to-morrow, and those, who do not here find satisfaction on topics treated of in this part of the work, I beg will withhold their conclusions, and wait for the third and last parts of it.

In pursuing the discussions I have not, knowingly, wounded the feelings of any one, nor even by a word passed judgment against any. Others, I trust, will award to me the same equitable treatment, and not hastily, in judging, give sentence against me. I leave to every one the reward of his labour, aiming myself only to gather fruits that may be useful, and now and then a flower for enjoyment. What pleasure would it give me to have made more accessible, more natural, and more delightful the view of the Sacred Scriptures, which they exhibit from the side from which I have laboured to present them. The influence of the impression thus produced would be of wide extent, much wider than I can explain by a few brief remarks.

The observations, which, to many readers might appear too learned, I could wish to have passed over by all such. They are inserted for the sake of others, to whom the reasons of my translation must be given. No word is employed without necessity, or for a display of learning; for my vocation is, not to be a verbal critick of the Hebrew language, but to make the Hebrew books intelligible by placing them in their proper light, and to show their proper application and use.

*Weimar, April 24, 1783.*

HERDER.

# I

## OF THE ORIGIN AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF HEBREW POETRY.

Hebrew Poetry had its origin in

1. The union of outward form with inward feeling. How far therefore it is Divine, and how far human. First essays in poetry among the Hebrews. The most ancient tablet of images. Language and poetry, an imitation of that creative agency, which determines the intelligible essence and outward form of its creations. Whether the poetical images and feelings of one nation, especially an ancient one, are to be judged by those of other nations. Character of the most ancient poetry. Whether individual images can be taken out of their connexions and compared to any purpose with each other. Example in Job's description of the horse.
2. Personification. Origin of this in the human mind. Its effects on morals and poetry. Examples of it from nature, history, and the idea of the Divinity.
3. Fable. Origin of this, and its use in the earliest development of reason, the formation of manners, and maxims of prudence. Respect in which it was held in the East, and its influence on poetry.
4. Tradition. Difference between this and history. Essays in poetical family traditions.
5. Poetical invention. Its design. Examples of it in the Cherub and other inventions, in the kingdom of the dead, &c. Collection of these species under the general conception of the **מַעַל** in its different forms.

Second species of poetry, the Song. Distinguished from mere figurative discourse. It is expressive of higher emotion, brings movement and purpose into the whole of a production, aims at the expression of harmony, and in the most ancient times was adapted to a chorus.

Combination of figurative discourse and the song. Genius of Hebrew poetry, as learned from its origin.

Appendix. Some of the grounds of the subjective origin of Hebrew poetry.

form and determinateness to the objects of its creation. Only the creative thoughts of God, however, are truly objective have actuality in their outward expression, and stand forth existent and living in the products of creative power. Man can only give names to these creations, arrange and link them together; beyond this, his thoughts remain but lifeless forms, his words and the impulses of his feelings are not in themselves living products. Yet, the clearer the intuition, with which we contemplate and systematize the objects of creation, the more unsophisticated and full the impulse of feeling, which impels us to impress every thing with the purest character and fullest measure of humanity—that which marks the analogy of our being to that of God—the more beautiful, the more perfect, and, let us not doubt, the more powerful will be our poetick art. In this feeling of natural beauty and sublimity the child often has the advantage of the man of gray hairs, and nations of the greatest simplicity have in their natural imagery and expressions of natural feeling, the most elevated and touching poetry. I doubt whether this origin of poetry can be better and more beautifully expressed than it is by the Hebrew *לשון*. The word means *to imprint to impress, to impress a form, a likeness*; and so *to speak in proverbs*, as the *משלי* of the Hebrew poetry are proverbs, wise sentences of the highest import; and again *to decide, to put in order, to speak as a king or judge, finally, to reign, to have dominion, to be powerful by the word of one's mouth*. Here we have the history of the origin of poetry and of the part of it, which is most powerful in its influence.

It would scarcely have been deserving of remark, were it not necessary to prevent frequent misconception and abuse, that the poetical images and feelings of one people, and of one age can never be judged, censured, and rejected according to the standard of another people, and another age. Had the Creator so ordered it, that we had all been born upon the same spot of earth, at the same time, with the same feel-

ings and organs, and under the same outward circumstances, there would have been nothing to object against the uniform standard of taste, of which so much has been said. But since nothing is more susceptible and multifarious than the human heart, since nothing is more subtle and evanescent, than the connecting ties, on which its feelings and passions depend, since it even belongs to the perfection of human nature, that it organize and form itself anew under every climate, in every age, and every peculiar mode of existence, since finally that modicum of articulated air, which we call language, and which yet bears upon its light and butterfly wings all the treasures of poetical imagery and sentiment—since this breath of the mouth, in its manifold variations exhibiting the diversities of every people and every age, is a real Proteus, it seems to indicate either a stupid or a proud presumption to require, that every nation, even of the most ancient times, should think, discourse, feel, and fashion its poetical conceptions in a manner to suit our habits and wants. It has been long remarked, that the human race in its successive ages and revolutions seems to follow the vicissitudes of our individual human life, (at least men imagine it to be so), and as the child does not feel, speak, and contemplate the world around him in the same manner as a man of mature age, who would require of nations in the infancy of the world, the facility and rapidity in poetical representation, which with us is the result of experience, the squeamishness and over refinement of our exhausted and worn out hearts. We must learn to dwell long upon plain and simple imagery, to revolve them over in our contemplations, to excite the sense of wonder, and picture them in gigantick forms. Such are the views, the language, and the feelings of children. They look with child-like wonder and astonishment, before they learn to perceive with discrimination. Every thing appears to them in the dazzling splendour of novelty. Objects that are unknown, or of larger magnitude, produce an effect

upon their unpractised and yet sensitive organs. They know not as yet how to compare, and by comparison to belittle the objects of their admiration. The tongue strives to express itself, and falls upon strong expressions, because its language is not become weak and facile from a multiplicity of empty sounds and stale metaphorical expressions. They often speak too, as the Orientals, and as uncultivated savages speak, till at length with the progress of nature and art they learn to express themselves like polished or like fashionable men. Let them enjoy their years of childhood, and let those Orientals also in the infancy of the world form their poetical conceptions, speak, and rejoice with a child-like spirit.

Still more incongruous would it be to take a single image or representation out of the connexion, in which it belongs, and compare its style and colouring with those of another, taken from a poet of a different age, of a different nation and language, and of diverse poetical powers. No two things in the world are wholly alike. No one thing is made for the purpose of being compared with another, and the most fresh and delicate growth, when torn from its place, is the first to wither. A poetical image exists only in its connexion with the emotion that prompted it. In losing that it loses every thing, and is only a senseless medley of colours, which only a child values according to the brightness of their tints. Perhaps too no poets lose so much by a comparison of extracted passages and images as the poets of the East. For they are the farthest removed from us, they sung in another world, in part three, four thousand years, before we discoursed about them. Should one compare for example, the picture of a horse in Job with Virgil's description of it, and neglect to remark, who it is that speaks in Job, and for what end, what was the character and estimation of the horse in Virgil's time at Rome, and in the days of Job in Idumæa, and for what purpose it was introduced in these different authors, (to say nothing of language, metre, the genius of the people, and the form of their po-



try) would he form a good comparative estimate of them? would they be fairly balanced and compared? But we proceed.

2. The form or image of sense accompanied with emotion readily becomes in the view of the mind excited by its influence a thing of life, and thus personification is the second higher step in the origin of the poetick art.

It is the nature of the human soul to refer every thing to itself, to think it like itself, and thus to find itself reflected in every thing. That which is agreeable to us we regard as loving us; what is adverse to us, hates us, as we hate it; that, with which we would delight to hold converse, speaks to us also, and its slightest sound, its most trifling utterance, is converted by the power of the imagination into language and intelligent expression. In this respect all ancient nations are alike. Their dictionaries could be formed and collected, and their grammatical forms established only on the principle, that names should be constructed with distinction of gender, and events which took place regarded as workings and agencies of living beings, according to the analogies of our human being. The Hebrew language is full of personifications, and

\* Aikin, in his Essay on the application of natural history to poetry, has instituted such a comparison, and has passed judgment somewhat strangely respecting Job's behemoth and leviathan. No poet will or should, by his descriptions, furnish details for a work on Zoology, since poetry aims not to give particular traits with distinctiveness, but to give power and effect to the combined whole. This must be looked for as the aim of the writer in Job, as in the same passages, the gigantick, the mysterious, and the marvellous, in these pictures, belong to the general purpose of the composition. The distance of Idumæa from Egypt, and the fact that in the former the horse was yet probably a foreign and rare animal, and an object of wonder, rendered this description of it suitable to the aim of the book, and indeed made it necessary. But so soon as we suppose the author to have been an Egyptian, all these relations fail, and are out of place, because in that country every one must have been familiar with the horse, the crocodile, the ostrich, and the hippopotamus.

it is undeniable, that this sympathy, this transfer of one's self into the objects around us, and ascription, as it were, of our own feelings to those objects with which we hold converse, has formed not only the inspiring principle of language, of speech, but to a certain extent also the first development and existence of moral principle. Relations of feeling and moral duties cease, where I conceive nothing in a living being analogous to my own being. The more deeply and inwardly I feel this resemblance, and implicitly believe in it, so much the more delightful will be my sympathy, and the exercise of it, in accordance with my own sensibilities. The most ancient poetry, which exerted such a forming influence upon men in their savage state, made use of this fountain of overflowing sensibility to form and cherish in them the feelings of compassion and benevolence. In the blood of Abel his soul cries from the ground. So to Adam, surrounded by the brute creation, all seemed to be animated by his own feelings, and he sought among them all for a help-mate and companion. The sun and moon were kings of heaven, servants of God, rulers of the world. The waving atmosphere was a brooding dove, and God himself, the creator of all, a work-master, after the manner of men, who looked upon his work, rejoiced in and blessed it. Nay, what is still more bold than this, he was the father of man, and man was appointed to be his vicar and substitute on earth.—Extravagant as this representation may seem to a heartless deist, it was yet natural and necessary for the unbiassed feelings of the human heart. Without God the creation is for us a chaos, and without a God, whose being is analogous to that of man, who thinks and feels as we do, no friendship or filial affection towards him is possible, nor can we feel a child-like confidence in communing with a being, so beyond our knowledge, and yet so intimately near to us. The infinite God, therefore, vouchsafed to render the primary ideas of himself as accessible to man, as was possible, and as well in the first pictures of

creation, as in the history of the patriarchs ; this friendly confidence and trust is the ground of all the relations of man to God, and of God to man. In the shepherd's tent God also is a shepherd, in the family circle he is the father of all. He visits them as a friend, and permits himself to be invited to the domestick festival. He was more pleased with his son Abel, than with Cain, and in vouchsafing his presence to Noah after the flood he smelled a sweet savour from the renewed earth. On the contrary, he was angry with tyrannical oppressors, and took the field, as it were, against Nimrod, the oppressor of the earth, as if he were also about to scale the heavens. Of Abraham, as if jealous of his paternal love, he required that he should offer up to him his son, the dearest object of his heart, and wrestled with Jacob to secure for him the name of a hero.'

In the book of Job we have unfolded and explained some personifications, on which depends the power of the most affecting discourses, and so it is with the excitement of sympathy in all kinds of emotion. If the poetry of the most ancient times has produced any effect upon the human heart, (and it has undoubtedly produced much), it has the power of doing so by this means alone. Hence, where this flexibility of the heart is wanting, even in our own times, and the man contemplates such personifications and measures them by pure reason, and according to geometrical rules, he will find in the Hebrew and Greek poets only irrational extravagances. In Hebrew the whole language is formed upon the principle of personification ; nouns, verbs, and even connecting words are constructed and arranged under its influence. Every thing with them has voice, mouth, hand, countenance, and those relations, which render their representation as son and daughter, one, become necessary for them as for other Orientals a significant and beautiful idiom.\* An idiom, however,

\* Examples are found in Jones' commentar, poes. Asiaticæ in suffi-

character, and a dress of fable, which separates it widely from our methodical style in prolonged and rounded periods. There too, those kinds of poetry, which are characterized by allegory and fable, are the most abundant and the most beautiful. In modern languages, on the other hand, for one simple Oriental fable drawn from the kingdom of beasts and of trees, we may furnish ten artificial narrations, which often contain neither fable nor history, and usually fall short of the former in richness of poetical invention. The strings of pearl, as the Orientals call certain collections of choice and well arranged sentences, are well known, and the beautiful tapestry of their instructive and more elevated poetry, which expands its richly ornamented flowers with so much magnificence, appears to them noble and godlike. But of these forms of poetry we shall speak more at large in their proper place ; at present we proceed to remark,

4. That even history in the East, especially when it relates to the ancient patriarchal traditions, readily assumes the dress of fable, and becomes as it were, a poetical and traditional representation of family history. Whoever reads the historical writings of the Old Testament, from the most ancient period, will scarcely deny this, and one, that is acquainted with the historical style of the Orientals, in other histories, will be still less disposed to do so. It is not merely, that here and there, in the simplest narrative, poetical forms of expression are inserted, because the voice of tradition perhaps transferred them from existing songs, or gave them for the sake of adding force to the expression ; not merely, that the narrative itself affects the entire simplicity of the poetical style, in regard to the use of connectives and the repetitions of words ; but for the most part also the form and outline of the whole narrative is poetical. Nor is this at all prejudicial to truth, but rather contributes to its clearness and force, by retaining and exhibiting in the tone and outward form of the narrative, as it were, the original impressions and images of

sense from which it was taken ; only the interpreter must find and retain this point of view, or he will misapprehend the tone of the sentiment, the aim and general scope of the narrative. The history of Paradise, of our first parents, and of the subsequent patriarchs, of the flood, of the tower of Babel, &c. appear obviously in the character of family and national traditions, and so it continues downward to the history of the Jewish patriarchs. Tradition has formed into a sacred narrative, a sort of *fabula morata*, where in every line the favour of Jehovah to their fathers beams forth as the origin, from which they derive the glory of their race, their right to Canaan, and the prerogative which they claim before the nations, which inhabited it. What among other races bears the marvellous character of heroick and extravagant traditions, is here of divine and patriarchal authority, confirmed by genealogical registers and monuments, and exhibiting such simplicity of ornament, that the artificial forms of poetry are unsuitable to it. Among all nations history has grown out of tradition, and among the Hebrews it has remained even down to the period of the kings, in regard to the style, almost always traditionary in its character. To this the language, the modes of thought, which distinguished the people and the sacred writers, but especially the high antiquity of the age, has contributed.

5. I come now to *fiction, or poetical invention* properly so called, which consists in combining known, distinctly marked images, to form a new creation before unknown, and having its own distinctive character. Of this poetical creation the Cherub may serve as an example. The lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle are beings well known ; the combination of them into a creature of symbolical import was the work of poetical invention. It will be observed, that I use poetry and poetical invention, not in the sense of groundless fiction or falsehood ; for in the sphere of the understanding, the import of a symbol poetically constructed is truth. The parts themselves of

the composition are taken from nature, and I know no fiction, which has not received its elements from that source. Hence, the invention of fictions entirely new is so difficult, that the greatest poets copy each other, and nations farthest removed from each other coincide in the essential characters, and leading forms of those beings, with which they have peopled the world of their imaginations. One of these leading forms, the features of which are recognized among all nations, which have poetry, is the Cherub, perhaps the oldest of all poetical creations. It stands on the ruins of Persepolis, which, in the form of their inscriptions, and the style of their architecture, go back beyond the periods of recorded history, and, in the form of the Sphinx, lies before the ruins of numerous Egyptian temples. It is referred to in the marvellous tales of India, of Thibet, of China, of Persia and of Arabia, and occurs in the ancient traditions of the Greeks, as well as in the Northern Sagas, though in every nation under its own peculiar modifications of form. Even the poetry of the Middle Age has made use of it, and scarcely any poetry is unfurnished with winged beings of the same general character. The Hebrews, in my apprehension, have the oldest and purest traditions respecting it, and retain the natural and probable account of the origin of a composition in itself so strange and marvellous. According to their account it was a guardian of Paradise, and thus by consequence a symbol of things secret and mysterious, that is, of places sacred and unapproachable. From this, by an easy transition, it become itself, in its component parts, a mystery, a synthesis of the most noble and exalted of living creatures. It came to be attached to the ark of the covenant, as a guardian of the mysteries of the law, and thereby a sustainer of the Majesty of Jehovah, who watched over them. It was transferred also to the clouds, and became first a poetical, then a prophetic vision. These last applications of it, however, belong to the poetry of the Hebrews alone. The Cherub, in the char-

acter which it bore before the time of Moses, the creature of marvel, that guarded the secrets or treasures of the primeval world, was universally known ; in the character given it among the Hebrews after the age of Moses, as the sustainer of the glory of God, it was known only in Judæa, and passed into it by the transitions, which I have explained.\*

From this Cherub, thus placed in their way, the fancy of the Orientals with its boundless stores of imagery took occasion to produce other like inventions, and upon its wings soared into the regions of wild and extravagant fiction. In relation to this subject the reader should peruse in Bochart's *Hierozocion*, the sixth book relating to fabulous animals, and call to mind the numerous fabled creations in the Oriental tales. The ground of every fiction is for the most part a truth in natural history, so that we have not so properly pure fiction, as truth under the garb of fiction, and the unusual, the singular, and the strange, elevated to the inconceivable and the extravagant. An example of this is found in the history of the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge, in Paradise. This simple, and as given by Moses, intelligible and natural tradition, was gradually, in its subsequent transmission, shaped into a strange and wonderful mystery. Now the tree of life was represented as a peculiarly healthful tree, that stood near to that which bore the forbidden and deadly fruit ; then it became a growth productive of physical immortality ; and the tree, by which God proved the obedience of man, was, even in the representation given of the serpent as the tempter, already become a tree of super-human knowledge. The same process of the fancy will be found in regard to other inventions of Oriental fable. Job's behemoth and leviathan, which were real animals, because they were of foreign growth, large in size, and objects of fear and wonder, were pictured in characters, which with small addition and exaggeration

\* See Vol. 1. Dialogue VI.

would have transformed them entirely into creatures of fable and mere objects of wonder.

In the prophets certain fictitious animals occur, the existence of which was at that time credited in the popular traditions. But aside from these, the Hebrew poetry has kept itself pure from whatever is monstrous and inconceivable in the creations of imagination. As it fills every thing with Jehovah, so its boldest combinations of imagery proceed from this source. The thunder was the voice of God, a voice which the sacred poets understood; light was his garment which he cast about him as a mantle, and in the morning dawn outspread upon the darkness of the night. The heavens were his tent, his palace, his temple. Universal nature composed a host of living creatures, which he employed as his ministering servants. The universe was filled with his angels, employed as his messengers, but in a form at once beautiful and worthy of the divine being; for the living powers and objects of nature were themselves the messengers intended, and the angel of his countenance, the often personified Word of God, was the forth-going utterance of his will, the outward expression of the mind of God. If, in the earlier books,\* the gods of the heathen appear as demons, this was in accordance with the delusion of the nations who worshipped them, for most of the Gentiles believed the image, to which they prayed, to be animated by a spirit. The prophets of Israel seized upon this faith, and degraded these demons, as vile, imbecile, and impure beings, subordinate to the true God, till the great Isaiah rejected this also, and exhibited the vanity and nothingness of an idol as it was. Satan himself in earlier times was only an angel of God, whom God sent as his messenger. Opposed to him on the side of Job stood another angel,† who was an advocate in the presence of God for the innocent object of his

\* Deut, xxxii, 16. 17.      † Job, xxxiii, 23.



complaint. Thus the picture presented in this book is wholly of a poetical character, and under the form of a judicial process.

The kingdom of the dead resulted from a combination of conceptions so natural in itself, that I do not wonder at its occurrence among the Hebrews, as among many other nations. No metaphorical separation of the body and the soul was yet known, and the dead with their visibly prostrated powers, were conceived as still living in the grave, but in a shadowy, obscure, and powerless condition. The voice of the murdered victim cried out in his blood, and the feeble, stifled voice of the dead was still represented to the imagination beneath the earth, which covered them. The whispering voices of those, who dwell in the tombs, is a general article of popular faith with the Hebrews, the Arabians,\* and other ancient nations. Now as the tombs of the East were spacious caves, in which multitudes were deposited side by side in their last sleep, the conception of a subterraneous kingdom among the nether shades, was obvious and easily formed. Thither whole families descended to join the ghosts of their fathers. Heroes, kingdoms, and all the trappings of victory, with which they were buried, went down there together. The heroes, who were already there received them ; and as powerless shades they pursued the same unsubstantial phantom of glory, which they had pursued in life. To all these hosts of the dead, too, was given a king, with his royal tower or strong hold, whose bars and gates no one could break through ; for no power can restore the dead to light and life. There murmured the dark rivers of the dead, because in the deep caverns of the earth we so often meet with streams of water, and hear their obscure, subterraneous, and melancholy sounds. The dying man hears these streams, because according to oft recorded experience, the senses of those

\* See Schulten's Notes on the Hamasa, p. 558.

sinking through weakness, as they gradually fail, have a consciousness of sounds as of distant waves. In the same figurative representations, death, who is always lying in wait for his prey, became a hunter with nets and cords, while at the same time, because the body is fearfully wasted and consumed in the earth, he is described as a monster, who feeds upon and devours the dead.—So neutral were all their transitions of thought, which, with the usual modifications, occasioned by varying circumstances of country and climate. are common to almost all nations.

But enough of examples. We have now treated in regular gradation the several successive kinds of poetical representation, which all proceed from the same source, the utterance of the soul in the language of imagery and emotion. For every one will see, that poetical personifications, the representations of fable, enigmas, sententious proverbs, and finally, the proper creations of poetry, not only themselves belong to the *mashal*, but can derive their distinctive characters, only from the modifications of this same inspiring principle of poetry in the soul. In the most ancient times the language of sentiment was concise, lofty, and full of energy, as we perceive from the blessings pronounced by the patriarchs, the discourses of Job, and the oracles of Balaam. From these the sayings and poetical expressions of the prophets differ strictly speaking, as to their general character and style, only as the weaker from the stronger, the later and often imitative from the ancient and original power. For even among the prophets, and in the same prophet, there are very different degrees of energy and conciseness in their figurative language. The language in their time had already become more practised, images and sentiments had become more common-place, the spirit of poetry did not reach nor retain the vigour and originality of the primitive ages. If these views be correct, there is no sufficient reason for considering the writings of the prophets as constituting a pecu-

liar species of poetry. Their style was often, indeed, that of poetical prose, which still retained the air and movement of the earlier parabalick poetry. When the style is aphoristick, and marked by the mere orderly arrangement of sentences without logical connexion, it necessarily gains in conciseness and dignity, and we have a collection of such sentences in the Proverbs of Solomon. As nearly related to these, we had also enigmas, like that which we have respecting Sampson, in which the tone and parallelism of the perfect *mashal* is observable. All this, therefore, belongs to one and the same class, and the Hebrew **חידות**, an intricate and dark discourse, includes more than the mere riddle. Every pithy and sententious expression, that is, at the same time difficult of apprehension, belongs to it, and a greater portion of the Oriental figurative style of discourse aims at this as its principal beauty.

To what subject matter this is applied, and whether this sublime or enigmatical style of figurative discourse be expressive of praise or blame, of love or hatred, of joy or sorrow, whether in prolonged or brief effusions, are not considerations of a nature to constitute co-ordinate kinds of poetry. They are all varieties of the same kind, imaginative metaphorical discourse with the uniform and lofty parallelism.

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But we here enter upon a second species of the poetick art, I mean *the song*. So soon as musick was invented, poetry acquired a new power, a more graceful movement, and greater harmony of sound. The simple utterance of motion in images of sense had only the most natural and simple form and dimension, the systole and diastole of the heart and breath—the parallelism. With the accession of musick it acquired a higher tone, a more measured cadence, and even

rhyme, as we see in the song of Lamech. What was before a simple play of the breath, became now a measured sound, a dance, a choral song, a musical utterance of emotion. When musick was invented, lyric poetry also, and the dance in measured movements without doubt were brought into use. Let us see then what the art of poetry gained or lost by the change.

1. All musical poetry requires a more elevated emotion. If it utters its musical tones in figurative expressions, these must be animated by excited feeling, imparting continuity and unity of character to the lofty movement of the imagery, and giving it a form of more exalted harmony. Whatever may be the character of the emotion, which prevails in a lyrical effusion, its movement and harmony will be regulated accordingly. A hymn of adoration, a fiery ode, a tranquil song of joy, and an elegy expressive of grief and affliction, are not modulated in the same tone and manner. There are, therefore subdivisions of the song, but the general conception is the same in all. The elegy **קִינָה**, the song of joy or love **שִׁיר**, the song of praise **הַזְהֵלָה**, and the different modifications of the mode of singing arising from the difference of instruments, all come under the common name, song **מוֹמָר**, which derives its distinctive import from the cadences and caesural pauses, which the musick has introduced. To divide lyrical effusions from a regard to outward circumstances, and to call, for example, a particular species the idyll, is adverse to the spirit of Hebrew poetry, and indeed unpoetical. Among the Greeks every idyll and all its parts were not necessarily song, and on the other hand in the beautiful song of songs all does not partake of the character of the idyll, although the whole corresponds to the general conception of the tranquil song. Even the more general form of figurative utterance, and in its most artificial kind, the dark and involved enigma, is not absolutely opposed to the song, as we perceive in many

of the Psalms,\* and in short, the contents, the subject matter do not determine the kind, but the mode of treatment, and the form in which it is expressed.

2. From this view it appears, that the application of musick, of singing, brings with it a sort of melody, and therefore continuity, plan, purpose, into the whole and all the parts of a lyrical production, such as were not found in the simply figurative style, except so far as it derived them from the subject. Not that I would take from Horace or Pindar a metrical arrangement, by which the Psalms of David should be measured. Every emotion contains its own law, consequently, also, its characteristic aim in itself, and hence those Psalms, which are properly expressive of emotion, cannot be without these. The didactic pieces, though accompanied with musick, have less of these, and so arrange their aphoristick sentences often by the letters of the alphabet. Yet even this shows that the lyric poem as such must have a sort of measure, and a determinate extent, though it should be taken from the alphabet itself.

3. Musick requires harmony of sound, and since Hebrew musick was probably free from the restraints of artificial rules, it could on that account approximate more nearly to the movements of the heart. Nothing is more difficult to translate, than a Hebrew Psalm, especially one adapted to the dance and the choral song of earlier times. Its evanescent tones are breathed in a rhythmical movement of the most free and unrestrained character, while the difficult measures of our language, its protracted and harsh syllables, drag themselves tediously along. In the Hebrew a single word, easily uttered and agreeable in sound, expresses the whole sentiment. In ours ten are often necessary; and though they express it with more logical distinctness, it is with less ease and eloquence.

4. Most of the poetry, that was accompanied with instru-

\* Ps. xlix. 78., &c.

ments among the Orientals, was composed of the choral songs, often sung by several choruses, and sometimes accompanied with the dance. What inspiring fulness of effect this must have given to song in those early times, in which the emotions of the heart, were as yet little controled, when in praise of God or in commemoration of some national blessing it was sung by an assembled people, in the fulness of national pride and of popular exultation, I leave every one to judge according to his own feelings. In our own times, when nations are mingled in confusion, so that we scarcely have the same God, but few interests in common, and no common country, we see nothing of the kind. With them, musick and language had nothing artificial, but were the native, the inspired and inspiring utterance of the heart. No cold and formal stateliness, no chills of a Northern sky, oppressed the soul, and restrained its emotions. The song of Moses and Miriam, the voice of a host of many myriads singing in chorus the song of their deliverance, with sounding instruments of musick, beneath an Arabian sky, and celebrating the glory of Jehovah their deliverer—where is there a song so exciting and so elevating as this? And this, too, was the pattern of the songs of Israel in better times.

Figurative discourse then, the language of metaphor, and allegory, and song, are the two leading forms, under which the spirit of poetry among the Hebrews manifested itself; and should or could there be more? They are poetry for the eye and the ear, through both which they soften and agitate the heart. In the figurative style of discourse an individual speaks. He instructs, reproves, consoles, directs, commends, contemplates the past, and discloses the future. The song is sung either by one or many; they sing from the heart and melt the heart, or they infuse instruction in sweet and liquid tones. Both these kinds of poetry were held sacred among the Hebrews. The most eloquent writers in the first kind were the Prophets, and the most sublime lyrical effusions were

the songs of the temple. Whether these two kinds were expanded into ampler forms, as the drama and heroick poetry, will be shown hereafter.

In conclusion, I observe once more, that the same lofty, sententious style, the language of metaphor and allegory, sometimes leads to a hidden and mystical sense. Neither is this peculiar to the Hebrews. It belongs also to the Arabians and the Persians, and the most favourite ode of Hafiz, as a common chance, gives a very subtle and mystical sense, in which he that will look for it may find all the treasures of knowledge. The ground of this lies in the genius, the origin, and the radical principles of Oriental Poetry. A sublime but obscure image, a comparison followed out with acuteness, a divine aphorism, which an enigmatical parallelism utters as it were only from a distance, these forms of expression require to be illustrated and explained. And when a man divinely inspired speaks, when in the name of God he discourses of the destinies of the future, who would not readily anticipate more than perhaps he means to utter. And who would not, moreover, gladly find it afterwards in his divine oracles, even if he be not an Oriental, prone to admiration, and striving after high and mysterious meanings. Thus it has, indeed, fared for centuries with the poetry of the Hebrews, and, if our age and nation deserve any praise, it is for their cool and persevering endeavour to approximate at least, the simple, original sense of those ancient poets, and to listen to their oracles in the true spirit of antiquity, undazzled and unprejudiced by glosses and the notion of a mysterious meaning.\*

\* I have ventured to omit here a short extract from Opitz, a German writer of the seventeenth century, and a poetical effusion of the author on the origin and office of poetry. They seem intended merely for garnishing, and are not necessary to the connexion of the author's views.

## APPENDIX.

Some of the subjective grounds of the origin of Hebrew poetry.

The foregoing remarks treat of the origin and essential characters of Hebrew poetry objectively ; they were designed to exhibit the twigs and branches of the tree, as they spring from the trunk and root. But some, perhaps, may wish to see the ground and soil, by which the tree was sustained ; in other words to find some of the circumstances designated, in which the language became adapted to such images and emotions, and could extend its powers of expression by personifications, fictions, songs and proverbs. Here too, as in the preceding observations, I shall rather exhibit facts than speculations.

1. Such images and ideas, as even the first chapters of Genesis have preserved to us, are impossible for a savage and uncultivated people. So long as man remained a mere clod, incapable of thought, and urged to action only by the most pressing physical necessities, he could not attain to such abstractions and applications of names, as the first picture of the creation has given in an order and symmetry suited to the understanding of a people still under the dominion of the senses. Whoever may have been the author of this fragment, it gives proof, in its images, and the scope of its representations, of being the work of a skilful master. No Orpheus here tames the tiger, and the lion ; no Silenus sings in grandiloquent poetry, a cosmogony wrapped in fable. All this was the birth, or abortion, of a later artificial mode of thought, and of a mystifying style of representation. Here all is simple and divine, as if one of the Elohim had himself instructed the genius of humanity. The most slight and facile determinations and classifications of objects are connected together, and poetically expressed to the understanding of man, and he is elevated by an imitation of the invisible Father and Creator, in the alternation of tranquillity and active toil, to be the visible lord of creation.



2. But again, these refined ideas, even in the relation, in which they are here placed, are found already fixed in the radical terms of the language, as if they had been planted in, and grown up with it. This language, therefore, however numerous may be the traces, which it bears, in its ideas and the simplicity of its constructions, of the infancy of the race, had already become formed throughout when this first fragment was, I will not say composed, but even conceived. No Caribbean savage speaks in such language, either as to the sound or the formation of the words. Here are no prolonged sounds to signify the most trifling things, no wild wilderness of names clustered together, but all hangs rather on a single thread, and so the whole language branches regularly from the simplest roots. In regard to its etymology and grammar, (I do not say its syntax and style of composition) the ancient Hebrew language is a masterpiece of conciseness and orderly arrangement, corresponding to the impressions of sense. One might well suppose a Divine Being had devised it for the infancy of the human race, in order to communicate, as it were, in short, the earliest conceptions of logical order.

3. A language formed at so early a period was, moreover, a real treasure for the race, which possessed it. They had in it numerous images and emotions already embodied, which became their inheritance, and which they had only to apply. We know nothing of the magnificence and the wisdom, which were embodied in the ancient language of Egypt, but we know thus much, that a Phœnician brought the alphabet to Greece, that the Pelasgians and Ionians were originally Asiatic tribes, having probably an affinity with those, to whom this language belonged. According to the Mosaick records it was transmitted from upper Asia to the banks of the Euphrates, and its whole character gives proof, that the climate of Asia was its birth place. Its ideas are full of striking contrasts, of light and shade, of rest and activity. This is the character of the Oriental heavens, and of the genius of Oriental nations.

In Greenland it would not so early have unfolded itself. Where nature is rude and barren, and man labours under the heavy burthens, which it imposes, he becomes skilled perhaps in the laborious arts, in the severe and dexterous applications both of mind and body, but is not fitted for the development of liberal ideas, of enlarged views, and comprehensive and susceptible emotions.

4. This language, ancient as it was, and formed under a mild and open sky, was transmitted to a race of herdsmen. Men devoted to such a mode of life were well adapted to preserve and more fully to carry out the primitive ideas and historical traditions which it contained. The occupation of herdsmen was one of the earliest in the history of human improvement. Still it presupposes an incipient cultivation, and cannot subsist without divers arts and regulations. These, however, are all of the simplest and most innocent kind. It served to unfold the domestick relations, and to establish paternal and patriarchal authority. It domesticated animals for the use of man, and called forth feelings of gentleness towards the brutes in general. It gave a sense of the freedom of nature, that is still inextinguishable in the minds of the Bedouins, since they avoid cities as the confinement of a prison. If too, in this race of herdsmen ancient impressions of the God of nature, of the patriarchs who were the objects of his love, of moral rectitude and innocence prevailed, they found in this free and roving mode of life a favourable soil, in which to take deeper root, and secure a permanent growth. Hence, the traditions, which we have received of Paradise, of the patriarchs, and of the most ancient fortunes of our race, come in the form of the simple tales of herdsmen. They retained that, which a herdsman might naturally apprehend and preserve in his sphere of life and his associations, as much as was adapted to his forms of thought and mode of living. This same peculiar mode of life gave scope also to those gentler affections, by which we find these traditions so characterized, and to this

we are to ascribe the pictures of friendship with God, and the intimacy of angels with the patriarchal heroes. Let the offering up of Isaac be converted into an allegory representing his mortal sickness and recovery, (not that it was so, but to bring the matter nearer to our modes of conceptions), what admirable firmness in the uncomplaining hero, whose son for three days was in his conceptions already lost to him, and who gave him up without a murmuring word. Let us represent the tower of Babel, as the allegorical description of a conquering and oppressive empire, that ruled despotically upon the earth, and aspired even to the dominion of God in the heavens, and how striking does the fable become! So too, the story of Jacob, who, during his first nightly repose out of his father's house, contemplated the opening heavens, and when beset with dangers wrestled with his protecting angel and prevailed—how beautiful, considered even as fictions, are these traditional tales of a race of herdsmen! To the successive generations, by whom they are rehearsed, these traditions bring God apparently near, and with him bring trust in his goodness, innocence and the cultivation of human affections in all the relations of domestick life. No warrior of the Iroquois, or hunter of the Huron race, could have invented fictions such as these.

5. But again the mode of life had a still more decided influence upon a race secluded from others, and that accounted itself too privileged to admit the intercourse of strangers. And what gave it its peculiar distinction? The same, of which we have already treated, its language, and its original descent, its traditions, and its ancient privileges, the oracles and prophetick blessings of its patriarchs. Why did the Shemites despise Ham and Canaan? Because their ancestor degraded them, and the shame of a deed of villany was fixed upon their family. Why was it, that Ammon and Moab were placed so low by Moses, although at the same time, on account of their affinity to the Israelites, he forbid their being injured? It was

Because they were dwellers in caves, and the offspring of an incestuous intercourse, the reproach of which, according to their prevailing notions could never be removed from the family. How came it, that Israel in Egypt remains a distinct people, than an Egyptian ruler, Joseph, with all his pre-eminence of rank among that people, numbered his sons, born of an Egyptian woman of high rank, with these poor herdsmen, and not with the Egyptians? If here be not pride of birth distinctly marked, it can be found nowhere. These poor herdsman had fathers, to whom they gave the highest honour, genealogical records extending even to Adam, which even under the severest oppression, they never failed to have their (scribes) to preserve and transmit. Why did Moses choose rather to suffer affliction and shame with his own people, than to enjoy honour in the land of Egypt, when he had respect to the origin from which he sprung? He saw the ancient prerogatives and claims of his race, and preferred to be its deliverer, though with the greatest hazard, than, in the enjoyment of quiet and dignity, to become their oppressor. These genealogies also, this ancestral pride, of an unmixed race of herdsmen, has, together with their primitive language, preserved to us, free from foreign mythologies, which they regarded as idolatry and superstition, free from the mixtures of learned lore, which they despised, the ancient traditions of the race, and impressed upon their poetry the tendencies, which originally proceeded from the formal and oracular benedictions of their prophetick fathers. In the jumble of nations, which existed in Europe, no such ancient monuments and pure ancestral poetry was possible. In Idumea, where patriarchal princes reigned, and where they followed a severe and laborious mode of life, poetry, also, as the book of Job shows, maintained, in a language originally the same, a severer and more sustained character.

6. In order to preserve and continue genealogical records, writing was obviously necessary. and I have found propable ev-

idences, that alphabetical writing was invented in connexion with this and for this purpose, at a very early period. It was necessary to designate names, on which the whole was built, and, since the sensuous image of the most remarkable circumstances in a man's life was not sufficient for this purpose, there was an effort to combine such an image and a sound together. Thus originated the characters of the most ancient alphabets, and at the same time the names of those characters. Beth, the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet, means a house. In form it was made to resemble a house, and at the same time, by chance perhaps, the opening of the mouth in articulating it, and so of other letters. The alphabet must be very ancient, for it seems to have been formed at the same time with the language itself. In these remarks I do not mean to give the Hebrew praise which is not due to it. It is undoubtedly a sort of infantile language, that has not received a progressive development like the Greek and Latin, but its plan was large, well defined, and wisely arranged. Its letters, though imperfect marks, fitted rather to recal the known, than to teach the unknown, were sufficient to determine the radical forms of the language, their inflections, and relations, and, since all ancient nations uttered their words with strong accents, the completion of the most ancient prosody was effected by placing, where it was necessary, a few marks to designate these over the letters. It is sufficiently proved, indeed, that the accents of the most ancient languages were not like our accents, but distinctions of sound of a higher order and resembling musical notes; yet by means of these, within the brief space of the parallelism, the simplest kind of artificial rhythm was produced.

7. All these peculiarities and early advantages induce the belief, that the commencement of human cultivation arose, not from chance, or the mere throw of contingencies among a brute herd, but from paternal care and a Divine Providence. And as little as I am able or would venture to designate the

mode, in which this Divine aid was vouchsafed, still less would I venture to doubt or deny its reality. If we had more numerous written monuments of ancient nations, or if we found them among uncultivated tribes of the present day, this origin would undoubtedly be confirmed by greater variety of evidence. As here narratives are given in simple childlike tones, so it would be found among other nations modified by their peculiar modes of thought. Thus here every thing proceeds from the first original impulse, and the Hebrew race claim no merit, but for transmitting, by their language, climate, and mode of life, these original impressions unmixed and unsophisticated to later times. These appear to me the subjective grounds, which have produced and moulded the original memorials of this people, and the eye of providence cannot here be mistaken or denied.

## II.

### CALLING AND OFFICE OF THE PROPHETS.

#### Of the calling of Moses.

1. The appearance of God to men. Fire was the constant symbol of the manifestation of the Divine presence. What was meant by the angel of God, the angel of his presence. Of God's appearing to Moses, to the Elders of Israel, to Elijah, to Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Comparison of these with his appearing in the most ancient times. Gradations of poetry in the development of images. What influence was exerted on Hebrew poetry by the circumstance that it was permitted to exhibit no picturable form of the Divine Being.
  2. The word of God to Moses; to the later Prophets. Words and deeds according to the circumstances of the times, included in the duties of the Prophets. Power of the prophetick word. Whether the Prophets spoke from the impulse of their own arbitrary will. Form given to the Hebrew poetry by this earnest and determinative influence of inspiration. Diversity of form at different periods.
  3. Signs and wonders exhibited by Moses. For what purpose, and with what effect. Those exhibited by later Prophets, in things external, and in themselves. Examples from Isaiah.
- What the name Prophet originally signified. How transferred to oracular language expressed in poetry and musick. Whether the Prophets in uttering their prophecies were in the exercise of reason. Passages from Isaiah.
- Appendix. Why Prophets were peculiar to the Hebrews.

Most of the Hebrew poets were sacred personages, wise men of the nation, Prophets. Let us point out and unfold some of the peculiarities of this vocation and character. As Moses in his banishment was feeding his herds in the deserts of Arabia, he came to Horeb, the mount of God.\* And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a fiery flame from out of a

\*Ex. v.

bush. And God called him from out the flame and revealed himself to him, as the God of his fathers. He gave him words of commission for the deliverance of his people, and when Moses suggested doubts he gave him signs. Thus *visions words* and *signs*, as with the first and greatest of the Prophets ; so afterwards, either separately or together, were the credentials of his followers, and consequently also the soul of their poetry. It is important therefore to speak of these more at large.

1. The *appearance*, which drew the attention of Moses, was a flame of fire in a bush. Let the import of this symbol in the nearer consideration of it be what it might, it was here a symbol of the present manifestation of the Divinity, which, under the circumstances of time and place, could not be manifested in a more simple form. What prominent and visible object was there in the Arabian desert, but here and there perhaps a tree, a dry and arid shrub ? Moreover, from the most ancient times, fire was in the East, and among almost all nations, a symbol of the Divinity, as from its brightness and other properties, it is well fitted to be. It was, also, generally in the poetry and the institutions of Moses, though without image worship and idolatry, a standing symbol of Jehovah. Thus God is often called by him a consuming fire, whose wrath burns even to the lowest deep. Under the same form, also, he appeared on Mount Sinai ; he went before the host of Israel in a cloud of fire, sacred fire fell from heaven and consumed the offering, and a cloud like fire rested over the sanctuary. In the Prophets and Psalms, these images also are customary.

The God, who here reveals himself, assumes the name Jehovah, and is also called the angel of Jehovah.\* Thus Jehovah moved in the cloud before the camp of Israel, and yet it was also the angel of God, who went before Israel, and in other passages, the presence of God himself. Only an

\* Ex. iii. 2. 4. 6.—xiv. 19. 24.—xxxiii. 34.



ignorance of the spirit of Moses in these peculiarities of language, could have created a doubt here, or have formed different kinds of "angels of his presence." The Jehovah of Moses cannot himself be seen, when he appears in the symbol of any natural object; and this is, therefore, his angel, that is, his visible messenger, or according to the beautiful expression of Moses, the name of God is in it. As in the books of Moses it is so often and expressly said, that no man can see or represent to himself the face of God; so on the other hand, the names of God are carefully distinguished from this. Then, too, even in the natural import of the term, the face of God signifies "the special providence and oversight," which accompanied Israel, and so far as an outward sign of this presence was apparent, this sign was denominated the messenger, the angel of his presence.

To Moses, therefore, this divine manifestation was only a symbol. From his later history, we know how God refused to admit him to a vision of himself, though he spake with him as friend with friend. He only passed before him, probably in the violence of a tempest, and flashes of lightning, and called forth a voice of praise\* in view of his deeds, and the Divine attributes of his spiritual being. Among all the conceptions of human genius, there are, I suspect, few situations so sublime, as that so simply exhibited in this Divine narrative

When Moses came within the sacred tent,  
 The lofty cloud descended low,  
 And stood before the door and spake with him.  
 And all the people saw the cloudy column  
 Stand before the door, and all rose up,  
 And bowed themselves each one before his tent.  
 Jehovah spake with Moses mouth to mouth,  
 As one holds converse with his friend.  
 And Moses said to God, "behold, thou saidst to me,  
 Lead forth this people," but hast not showed me

\* Ex. xxxiii. 9—23. xxxiv. 1—8.

Whom thou wouldst send to be my present help,  
Thou saidst to me "I know thee by thy name,  
And thou hast found favour in my sight,"

Jehovah said, "my presence shall go with thee  
And I myself will give thee rest."

He said, "if thy presence go not with us,  
Then lead us up no farther hence,  
For whereby now shall it be known  
That I, and this thy people are received by thee?  
If not by this, that thou dost go with us,  
And I and this thy people are distinguished  
From all the nations of the earth?"

Jehovah answered, "even this I do for thee,  
For thou hast found acceptance in my sight,  
And by thy name I know thee."

"Then" I beseech thee "show me thy glory."  
My goodness will I make to pass before thee.  
And will proclaim Jehovah's majesty.  
For I am rich in grace, where I give grace,  
And filled with love towards those I love.  
But yet thou canst not see my face,  
For none can see my face and live.

He said again, here is a place by me,  
Where thou shalt stand upon a rock.  
There shall my glory pass before thee,  
And thou shalt stand within the cleft,  
My hand enclosing thee as I pass by.  
Then I will take away my hand,  
And my back parts shalt thou behold.  
But my face shall not be seen.—

And Moses rose up early in the morning,  
And went to Sinai as the Lord commanded him.  
And took the two stone tables in his hand.

'Then came down Jehovah in the clouds,  
And stood before him there,  
And proclaimed Jehovah's name.  
He passed by, Jehovah passed before him,  
And proclaimed "The Lord, the Lord God,  
Merciful and gracious, long suffering,  
Abundant in goodness and in truth,  
That keepeth mercy for thousands,

Forgiveth iniquity, transgression, and sin.  
 But in whose sight the purest are unclean.  
 He visiteth the wickedness of the fathers  
 Upon their children, and their children's children,  
 Unto the third and fourth generation."  
 And Moses hastened, and bowed himself,  
 And fell upon his face, and worshipped.

In like manner he manifested himself to the elders of Israel under outward forms, while in his essential being he could not be the object of sight,

They saw the God of Israel,  
 At his feet it was like glowing sapphire,  
 To look upon like pure transparent sky.

Although, however, an appearance of the invisible God had no place in the primitive Jewish theology, and, when he appeared under a symbolical form, that which was so manifested is called the angel of Jehovah, yet the Divine Being farther adapted himself to the apprehension of the later Prophets. They saw and described the manifestation which God gave of himself. But in this, too, we discover traits derived from Moses, who still remained the basis of the whole economy, varied only in accordance with the times, and the apprehensions of the different Prophets. In the beautiful manifestation made to Elijah, the second Moses, upon the same Horeb, the mount of God, perhaps even in the same cleft of the rock, we cannot fail to recognize a resemblance to the description just now given. Forty days and nights he travelled to Horeb the mount of God, and came to a cave and lodged there. And behold the word of the Lord came to him, and said, "What doest thou here Elijah?" And when he had answered, the voice said, "Go forth and place thyself upon the mountain before the face of Jehovah."\*

And lo ! Jehovah passed before him !  
 A great and violent tempest,

\* 1 Kings xix. 8—13.

That rent the mountains, and brake the rocks,  
 Went forth before Jehovah,  
 But Jehovah was not in the tempest.

And after the tempest came an earthquake.  
 But Jehovah was not in the earthquake.

And after the earthquake a fire.  
 But Jehovah was not in the fire.

And after the fire came a still, small voice,  
 And when Elijah heard the voice,  
 He wrapped his face in his mantle,  
 And went and stood in the door of the cave.  
 And lo ! there came a voice unto him,  
 And said, " What doest thou here Elijah ?"

The vision would seem designed to teach the Prophet, who, in his fiery zeal for reformation, would change every thing by stormy violence, the gentle movements of God's providence, and to exhibit the mildness and longsuffering, of which, in the passage above given, the voice spoke to Moses. Hence the beautiful change in the phenomena of the vision.—To the distinguished Prophet Isaiah, God appeared as a king enthroned and in his kingly temple : the prime ministers of his court stand around : the Cherubim, over which, according to the ancient simple representation, he was wont to dwell, are converted into Seraphim, which derive their characteristics partly from the servants of the throne and partly from the priests of the temple. The whole picture exhibits the regal magnificence and dignity, which mark the style of Isaiah.\*

The year in which the king Uzziah died.  
 I saw Jehovah sitting on a high uplifted throne.  
 His train of glory filled the temple,  
 And round the throne his servants stood.  
 Six wings had each of these,†

\* Isa. vi. 1—4.

† The wings of the Seraphim are derived from the Cherubim, and only their number increased, though the form of the animal, as well as the name, is otherwise changed. Seraphim, according to the import of the

With twain they covered their face,  
 With twain they covered their feet,  
 With twain did they fly.  
 And one cried to another and said,  
 "Holy, holy, holy,  
 Jehovah, God of hosts,  
 The earth is full of thy majesty."  
 The foundations of the pillars moved  
 At the voice of him that cried,  
 And the temple was filled with smoke.

The smoke here mentioned was the smoke of the burnt offering, to which are related also the glowing coals, and the foregoing ascription, for the magnificence of the king and of the temple are here associated together. To Ezechiel God appeared upon a moving throne in the clouds. The sapphire basement under his feet is taken from the vision of the elders as described by Moses; the fiery form in which he manifested himself is also from Moses; except that this ancient seer did not behold God in human form. The still later Daniel is the first of the Prophets, who ventured to represent God fully in the form of man. But even with him the appearance is in a night vision, and not a distinct beholding. It is a figurative representation among other symbolical visions.\*

This I saw, until the thrones were raised,  
 And the ancient of days enthroned,  
 His garment was white as snow,  
 The hair of his head like pure wool.  
 His throne was like the fiery flame,

Arabick term, means lofty forms, nobles, princes, and they exhibit only the human form veiled with wings in token of reverence for their king. Four of their wings are thus employed, while the remaining two for flight designate their office as swift messengers. The composition of the picture is in accordance with the spirit of Isaiah, the elements are from Moses and the Psalms.

\*Dan. vii. 9, 10,

Its wheels like burning fire.  
 A fiery stream issued forth,  
 And went before his face,  
 A thousand thousand ministered to him,  
 Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.  
 The judgment was set,  
 And the Books were opened.

This picture, too, derives its several features from mount Sinai, as they were exhibited in the benedictions of Moses, in numerous Psalms, and even in the vision of Isaiah, and in regard to the human form, as they were hazarded though indistinctly by Ezechiel in the form of the enthroned Jchovah. Thus the appearance of the Divine Being was, with the progress of time more and more developed in sensuous images, of which the earliest periods of antiquity exhibit no traces. In Job, God is the high, the incomprehensible and inconceivable being; who speaks in the tempest and walks upon the revolving circle of the heavens. In the books of Moses he can be looked upon only in his back parts, or in the outward manifestations of his being. He shows himself in his attributes alone, and in striking symbols. In the time of the patriarchs he was conceived by them as a herdsman; to the sleeping Jacob he appeared as the father of the family, while the heavens, in which he dwelt, were the chambers of his house, from which his servants descended upon a ladder, as seen in the vision of the patriarch. To Abraham he was a friend, making a visit of friendship, but denominated an angel, when he appeared in a visible form. The farther we trace the subject the more do symbols disappear, and as it seems to me, the silent reverence of the infinite and ineffable our increase. Even among the Prophets the appearance of God in vision was no necessary part of their calling to the prophetic office. Samuel, next in order to Moses, God called only by a voice from his seat above the Cherubim, where no form appeared, and most of the others received the word

of God unaccompanied by a visible manifestation. What this gave to the poetry of the Hebrews to distinguish it from the art among all mythological nations, is obvious of itself. It was the poetry of sages, not of mythological ghostseers and visionary idolaters. Hymns and epick poems, filled with visionary forms of Gods engaged in conflict, were not their work. The odes and songs of praise, which sing of God, praise him in his deeds, in the perfections of his works; with symbolical forms of manifestation they were very sparingly adorned, and traces of these become more abundant in proportion as the primitive sublimity of poetry diminished.

2. But still more important, than the appearance, was the *word of God* to Moses, the revelation of his name, and the commission given for the deliverance of his people. Of the name of Jehovah we shall speak in connexion with the giving of the law. That of which we now speak, the word of God, was the soul, as it were, both of the office and of the productions of the sacred poet. As given to Moses it was an obvious commission, and we find it the same also with the earlier Prophets. A command was given them containing not general precepts merely, but requiring immediate action. So spake Samuel; so also the Seers of the time of David; so Elijah and Elisha. They required the fulfilment of a definite command, and hence I might call them Prophets of action, of deeds, to distinguish them from the later Prophets, whose prophecies consisted more of general instruction and consolation, of reproof and encouragement. This difference too was founded in the difference of the times. The most ancient and most eminent Prophet, Moses, could speak and do. His whole life was the living word of God, was action. Of Samuel, as the Judge of the nation, the same may be said. In later times the power was in the hands of the kings, and to the Prophets nothing was left but the word; a word however, which they represent as efficient deed, as a most living and energising agency. Hence we find so many images to represent the power of the prophet-

ick word, which by a distant analogy also were applied to the spiritual efficacy of the word of God in general. It is called a fire, a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces and again a quickening and refreshing dew and rain, as in the delightful image of Isaiah.\*

My thoughts are not as your thoughts,  
 Nor my ways as your ways.  
 As heaven is high above the earth,  
 My ways are higher than your ways,  
 And my thoughts than your thoughts.  
 For as the rain and snow come down from heaven,  
 And return not thither, but water the earth,  
 And make it bring forth leaf and herb,  
 That it may give seed and bread to the sower,  
 So is my word, that goeth out of my mouth.  
 It shall not return to me void,  
 But shall accomplish that which I please,  
 And prosper in that whereto I sent it.  
 So shall ye also go out from me with joy.

The term "word of God," itself often means among the Hebrews, guidance, instruction, counsel, and action.

As to Moses, at this early period, unhappily a twofold word was given, to deliver his own people, and previously by numerous plagues to humble the proud and hard-hearted Egyptian, so it was also with the oracles of the Prophets. The import of them is twofold, made up of affliction and consolation, and of deliverance from evil and of punishment, and in both the acts of Moses often literally lie at the foundation. They inflict upon the rebellious and hostile nations all the plagues of Egypt, while they deliver, comfort, and avenge their own people with all the pictures of Divine guidance in the wilderness, of a delightful Canaan, and of a golden age. This I am aware has with many given to the poets of Israel the names of misanthropes, imprecating curses upon the world, nor will



I deny, that from the national pride of the Hebrews, the harsh expressions of many of their Prophets are liable to be misunderstood and abused. It is not, however, true, that every Prophet and poet, according to his peculiar feeling and temperament, from motives of private revenge and malicious humour, could scatter his blessings and curses. As Moses undertook his office unwillingly, so the same was true of most of the later sages, who must be almost constrained by necessity to the discharge of their duty, as Jeremiah, Ezechiel and others. As no one is willingly a herald of sorrow, where he would choose to communicate joy, so we see that the message, which most of the Prophets have to utter, which they treat as already in its accomplishment, as matter of fact, gives to themselves the greatest pain. No one in this respect is more an object of sympathy and compassion than Jeremiah. A soul of the tenderest sensibilities was destined to live in the worst of times, and to anticipate for his people still greater sorrows.\*

My bowels, my bowels! I'm filled with pain,  
 My very heart is full of anguish,  
 And yet I cannot hold my peace.  
 My soul hath heard the sound of trumpets,  
 The shout and alarm of war.  
 Destruction, desolation, is cried,  
 For all the land is desolate,  
 My tents are suddenly spoiled.

How long shall I yet see the standard,  
 And hear the sound of trumpets?  
 My foolish nation understand me not,  
 Unwise children and void of sense,  
 Wise to do evil, but never to do good.

I look abroad upon the earth,  
 And lo! it is desolate and waste,  
 Upon the heavens, and they have no light,  
 I see the mountains, and they tremble,  
 And all the hills are in commotion.

I behold and lo ! there is no man,  
 And all the birds of heaven are fled.  
 I look and lo ! Carmel is a desert,  
 And all its cities are laid waste  
 Before the presence of Jehovah,  
 Before the blast of his fierce anger.

A Prophet, who prefaces his sorrowful message with such an introduction, certainly does not herald it with a malicious joy, and of such cordial and sympathetick feelings all the Prophets are full. Their souls expand again with the freshness of the rose, when the storm has passed, and their agonized sensibility, relieved from a weight of oppression, exhibits then a seven-fold kindness and benevolence.

That this "energizing word," this outspeaking of God by the mouth of a Prophet, gave to the poetry of the Hebrews a peculiar form, is manifest of itself. To them their oracles had the utmost certainty, and the most vivid impress of truth. They saw the things, which they proclaimed, already unfolding, and thus, they were regarded as seers, nay, even creators of good and evil. They smote the land with the rod of their mouth, and their powerful word again gave it deliverance. God placed his message upon their lips, and breathed on them with the fire of Divine inspiration. Inwardly prompted by an irresistible impulse, they spoke also often against their natural inclinations, and with consequences painful to themselves, overmastered and urged forward by a higher power. Oracles of this kind have little or nothing to correspond to them in the poetry of other nations. Here nothing was invented for pastime. The poet did not picture forth the destruction of Jerusalem, or of Babylon, as a tragick representation. Had the poetical productions of the early sages and poets of Greece been preserved in greater purity, had we more unquestioned remains of their ancient theologians and Prophets, we might find traces of that resemblance, which still undeniably remains in the language of Calchas, Cassandra in Æschylus,

and of those, who prophesied either in visions or at the moment of death. The later Prophets, who received their oracles only in figurative images, in enigmatical representations, and these usually in dreams, speak on that account with less power. God himself distinguishes the clear and unambiguous voice, with which he spake to Moses, from the revelations by visions, figurative descriptions, enigmatical images, and dreams, and the distinction is sufficiently established and clear in the series of Prophets which are still extant. What the oracles of the Hebrew poets moreover, as compared with the poetry of other nations, lose in variety, in outward form and colouring, and in the play of fancy, they gain in the inward consciousness of truth, in godlike dignity, in sacred earnestness, and in these respects will always remain the admiration of the world.

3. To the hesitating and fearful Moses were given *signs*, or miraculous manifestations, which were adapted to the superstitious and conceited Egyptians, and designed to put to shame their wonder-working magicians. These wonders had no more determinate aim than this, and do not belong inseparably to the prophetick office. The greatest of such miracle-workers were subject to be tried by the law of Moses, and could be condemned to death, if they taught any thing contrary to Jehovah. The earlier successors of Moses, Elijah and Elisha, performed miracles in the period of Israel's weakness and idolatry, and these powers of the ancient world seemed to furnish clear proof, as it were, of the victory and triumph of God over the worshippers of Baal, as in the time of Moses over the wise men of Egypt. Among the later Prophets, and those more properly poetical in their character, the signs which they gave were of another kind. Instead of miracles, which supersede the laws of nature, the Prophet often employs singular and remarkable events to serve as suitable signs, that is, testimonies, accompanying his word, with which he commands attention or gives assurance of the truth of his declarations. Of this sort, is the birth of a child, of which Isaiah

speaks as a pledge of the deliverance of the kingdom of Judah, which is determined with reference to the age of the child. Here it was only the connexion between the two events that was remarkable, because it was beyond the powers of merely human foresight. Whatever may be understood by the shadow on the sundial of Ahaz, its regress in the language of the Prophet, was a present sign of returning years in the life of Hezekiah, and therefore in that connexion a pledge of a future event, "a sign." This word has no higher sense and no other dignity among Hebrew writers. Portents and omens were ascribed to foreign idolaters and false prophets, and a resort to them was forbidden. God reserved to himself his signs as pledges and assurances, or as means of rousing attention to the word of Jehovah, and this only on account of unbelief.

In many cases the Prophet himself was the sign, either by means of things, which he was required to set forth as symbols, or by fortunes which he experienced. Of the first, examples occur in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea; of the second, Ezechiel, who lost his wife, the delight of his eyes, and especially Isaiah are witnesses. As in the latter, through the last half of his book, the Israelitish nation is personified, as the servant and child of God in joy and in sorrow; so the Prophet himself as a servant of God, as a symbolical person chosen for this purpose, seems to suffer the whole burden and destiny of his people. In him, as an individual representation, God shows what in the whole nation, by all the evils which they were doomed to suffer in the captivity, he exhibited to all other nations. As the Prophet often feels himself in this to be placed as "a sign," we have hence occasions for those developments of the future, which are so affecting and so nearly connected with his personal feelings, and which have led me to consider these chapters of Isaiah, as the evangelical part of the Old Testament. The connexion between some of them, has indeed, been found so difficult to discover, that in some cases it is hardly known.

of whom the Apostle is speaking. By the aid of the connecting link, which has now been given, the personification of Israel in the person of the sympathizing Prophet, we shall find when treating of Isaiah a beautiful connexion in the train of thought, and a clear insight into the future. In short, vision, immediate inspiration, and symbolical action, characterize these sacred poets, and will carry us hereafter to a better conception of the spirit of their poetry.

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But what is the import of the word Prophet? Is it equivalent to vates, poet? or was the Prophet in his original character, a bard, a wandering improvisore? or finally, were the Prophets men out of their wits, naked dervishes? Let us inquire into the conception attached to the word not by tracing etymologies, which are always unsafe guides, but by observing the obvious use of the term at different periods of time.

The word Prophet, first occurs in the passage\* where God said to Abimelech, "restore the man his wife, for he is a Prophet." The word thus appears to have been known to Abimelech, and since the people over whom he ruled, were of Egyptian origin, the ground of doubt is removed. Among the Egyptians the term was applied to the superior priests; those who held intercourse with the Divinity, and were admitted to a knowledge of Divine mysteries, the interpreters of nature, in a word, those who were the mouth of the Gods. This is plainly the sense, in which the word Prophet occurs in the most ancient writings of the Hebrews. Abraham was represented to the king as a wise and holy man, entrusted with the counsels of the Deity; and who must be preserved harmless, even in a strange land. Again, God says to Moses,† "thou shalt be a God, and Aaron shall be thy Prophet;" showing indis-

\* Gen. xx. 7.

† Compare Ex. vii. 1. with iii. 16.

putably, that a Prophet imports the mouth of God, the speaker of his word, the revealer of his mysteries. In this, its primitive and most proper sense, it often occurs in Moses and the Prophets, and indeed the whole prophetick character and claim, as exemplified in Moses, was founded on this\*. “A Prophet shall God raise up like Moses, who shall speak to you in the name of God. Surely, the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the Prophets.”†

The conception now given, obviously did not include that of a musician and poet. Neither Abraham nor Aaron were poets. Samuel, Gad, Nathan, Ahijah, Elijah and Elisha had nothing to do with poetry, though some of them were very distinguished Prophets. The oracles, which they gave, were in very plain and intelligible prose. On the other hand, David and Solomon were poets, but not Prophets. The example of one,‡ who called for a minstrel, in order as it is said, to awaken in himself the gift of prophecy, has been greatly misapplied. He called him in order to calm and subdue his anger, under the influence of which he was not master of the dictates of reason, much less capable of uttering a Divine Oracle. By the term seers, also, applied to the Prophets in the times of Samuel and David, they were clearly distinguished from minstrels. They saw hidden things, looked into the future, and were what we call wise men, “sages.”

But, secondly, because these wise men, whether they spake of the past, the present, or the future, were the mouth of the Divinity; they spoke also the language of the Divine Being, that is, divinely oracular language, in a lofty figurative style, and so that came to be in name prophetick language, which was the most elevated poetry. Who, in speaking in the name of God, would speak in a manner unworthy of his majesty and dignity? Who that is inspired speaks coldly and without ele-

\* Num. xii. 6. Deut. xviii. 15—20. xxxiv. 10.

† Amos iii. 7. 1 Kings xxii. 22. 23. Jer. v. 13. ‡ 2 Kings iii. 15.

vation ? Did not the Pythia think it necessary to utter her oracles in verse, though it were of the worst style of verse ?— The origin of this notion shows itself from what was said above, but only as an incidental and derivative sense. In all languages poets are called vates ; but only because they were originally considered as divinely inspired seers, and revealers of the future, and because some noble and good men among them, were in reality, the instruments of Divine providence.

Nothing, therefore, is more natural, than that the uttering of Divine Oracles should, in process of time, be denominated prophesying, as we now daily use the word “preaching,” when we speak of a discourse uttered with the preacher’s tone and manner. The evil spirit came upon Saul, and he prophesied, that is, he uttered, amidst his mad ravings, lofty indeed, but irrational expressions. We know from various evidences of it, that poetry and musick had great power over him, and this power manifested itself, in his present weakness. The schools of the prophets, those ancients of Israel, also partook of the inspiration, and prophesied, i. e. spoke in lofty style, as Prophets were accustomed to speak. Miriam, Deborah, and others were Prophetesses, because they had a poetical inspiration, and inspired, especially sacred poetry, was always deemed of supernatural and Divine origin.

And because, in the third place, at that period of the world musick and poetry were associated, and even the poet and musician often united in the same person, it was quite natural also, that the notion of oracular discourse should be extended even to this art. Asaph and Heman prophesied upon stringed instruments, that is, they uttered in their songs sacred and lofty sentiments, they resolved, as they themselves say, the dark problems of wisdom by the sound of the harp. Poetry never produces so powerful an effect, as when it is supported by musick, and the sacred feeling, which is diffused by both arts combined, is enthusiasm. But it does not follow, therefore, that every Prophet had his instrument by his side, or that his

name and office distinguished him as a minstrel. The prophet Balaam, with his sublime and oracular declarations, spoke without an instrument, and the far feebler language of many of the later Prophets, which almost sinks to the level of prose, was scarcely fitted for musick. They carefully distinguished lyric song from their prophetick style.

Finally the Prophet, and the man of disordered intellect are not the same. We must greatly mistake the lofty and political character and sentiments of Isaiah, if we consider him abandoned by reason. That many of their symbolical acts must appear very strange, they themselves confess, and this was the very aim of their actions. Under the guise of folly was concealed a deep and important meaning, and if the expression, *insanire cum sapientia*, could ever be applied with propriety, it was here. They were, at all events, often the object of sarcasm to the vulgar, and of supercilious contempt to godless kings. While Jehovah was an object of reproach, oracles uttered in his name and containing severe admonitions would be counted folly and madness. But alas! the event gave sufficient evidence of their truth.

Jehovah gave to me the tongue of the learned,\*  
That I might know to speak in season  
A word to them that are weary.  
He waked me morning by morning,  
He made mine ear to hearken,  
As scholars hearken to the wise.

Jehovah spake to me in mine ear,  
And I rebelled not, neither resisted him.  
I gave my back to those that smote me,  
And my cheeks to them that insulted me,  
Nor hid my face from shame and spitting.  
My God Jehovah stood by me,  
And therefore was I not confounded,  
But hardened my face like flint,  
And knew I should not be ashamed.

\* Isa. l. 3.



Since he is near that justifieth me,  
 Who is he that will contend with me ?  
 Let us stand together in judgment !  
 Let him, who is against me, come near !  
 Behold, Jehovah is my helper,  
 Who is he that condemneth me ?  
 They all shall wax old as a garment,  
 The moth shall consume them !  
 Who is among you, that feareth Jehovah,  
 And obeyeth the voice of his servant,  
 But walketh in thick darkness,  
 And seeth no light ?  
 Let him trust in Jehovah,  
 And cast himself upon his God.  
 Behold all ye that kindle a fire,  
 That compass yourselves with sparks,  
 Go walk in the light of your fire,  
 And by the sparks which ye have kindled.  
 One movement of my hand upon you\*  
 And ye shall lie down in sorrow.

\* How simple and unambitious, yet how sublime an expression ! The Prophet but lifts his hand and their lights are quenched. They lie down sadly dejected upon the earth and in darkness.

## THE PROPHETS.

My inmost soul your sainted spirits greets;  
Ye true and faithful messengers of God!  
Take now, amidst your palmy groves, that rest,  
Which Horeb, Zion, Carmel never gave.

How manifold the gifts ye gave of old  
To your primeval ages! Laws and rites  
Divine, and faith, and solemn services  
Your mouths imparted free as living streams.

To states prosperity and steadfast rule,  
And customs wise and good by you were given.  
For great in soul, exalted far above  
The present times, and freed from vulgar fears,

Ye stood superior to the idle cares,  
And senseless turmoil of the busy throng,  
And backward far and forward cast your view,  
And saw the heavenly light of ages shine.

The light of ages, streaming through all time,  
Enkindled in your souls a heavenly fire.  
That, glowing long obscure, sent forth at length  
A glorious light for nations yet unborn.

For ye applied, within your holy caves,  
Your ear confidingly to catch the sound  
Of that small voice, to which at dead of night  
And early dawn, your wakeful hearts were tuned.

Like gentle showers from heaven, thus gently came  
Those tones, which yet with all the tempest's force,  
Awoke the slumbering world, as if the past  
And future times had sent their murmurs there.

Again I greet you, with exulting voice,  
 Ye guileless souls, that in the hands of God  
 Like harps responded, and expressed his will,  
 Revealed the future and his laws enforced.

Oh thou, who on the holy mount thyself \*  
 Didst lift above thy people and thine age,  
 And see, amid the thickest smoke, that light,  
 That wisdom now and glory gives to all.

And thou, whose kindling spirit summoned fires  
 From heaven, and from the dead the widow's son, †  
 Thou too, who didst behold Jehovah clothed  
 With heavenly brightness and with glory crowned ; ‡

Ye mourners, who with deepest sadest tones  
 And tears of anguish uttered forth your griefs ; ¶  
 And ye, who at the Prophets' setting sun  
 In shadowy twilight saw the promised times ; §

Ye Prophets all, who now in purer light,  
 Escaped from inward and from outward thrall,  
 Breathe tranquilly in palmy groves that peace,  
 Which Horeb, Zion, Carmel never gave ;

What now do I behold ? In friendly guise  
 Commingled with you are the wise and good  
 Of other nations, friends of God on earth,  
 'The Druids, Orpheus and Pythagoras,

And Plato, and whoc'er by wholesome laws  
 Has proved his people's father and their guide,  
 Has listened to the voice of God in truth,  
 And yielded up to God a guileless heart.

\* Moses. † Elijah. ‡ Isaiah. ¶ Jeremiah and others. § Daniel and others. The evening or setting sun of the Prophets means the closing period of the Prophets.

## APPENDIX.

## Reasons why Prophets were peculiar to the Israelites.

The existence of Prophets among the Hebrews, as their peculiar privilege, it has seemed to me, may also be shown to be connected with the peculiarities of their history. As it was a matter of ancestral pride, that they had their Origines, which, distinguished with marks of peculiar favour by the creator, went back even to the beginning of the world, so this sacred treasure of the family, by which they were so distinctly characterised, was manifest in the mode of thinking and the history of their most honoured patriarchs. Seth, Noah, Shem may be referred to as examples, and Abraham was remarkably distinguished by this characteristick. He left his country in order to serve the God of their fathers in a region where a Melchisedeck yet lived.

But to be more particular, the following circumstances should be noticed as connected with the history of this subject. 1. The *head of the family*, was, in the early periods of Hebrew history, the *priest* of his household, and at the same time the guardian of the religious ceremonies and sanctuary of the family. In relation too to such men as Abraham, the denomination of a *Prophet*, that is, of one entrusted with the Divine counsels, and, what is of still higher import even that of a *friend of God*, was by no means hyperbolical. Even in the book of Job a Prophet occurs, and throughout that work a religious tone prevails, which was the sacred impress of the primeval world. All wisdom in the East proceeded from God, all piety and devotion turned the mind to him.

2. Israel went down to Egypt, and here we know all religion had become already a matter of political management and state-craft. Their Prophets were an organised society of priests. As Moses was instructed in the wisdom, which they taught, and now learned, that the true sources of that, which led

to communion with God, were to be found among his own ancestors, so when God appeared to himself, and employed him as his instrument, no better word was in use, by which to designate his office than the word *Prophet*. Prediction, or the foretelling of future events, was as little thought of with him as with Abraham. The word signified a man, through whom God spake, and by whose instrumentality he accomplished his purposes. Could the worthiest object be designated by a more appropriate name? Has the Divine Being a nobler work among men than their cultivation? And was not he who undertook to advance this in those early times, amid obstacles apparently boundless, and with no human support, whether he did it as a teacher, or as an actor on the stage of life, was he not truly a man of God, a genius of humanity? Let one but look at those nations, which have remained behind or sunk into a savage state; observe to what a condition of horrible depravity human nature sinks, when it is not forced upward by a living power and aroused from its gloomy lethargy, and he will then be able to appreciate the services of those early guardians of our race, who diffused the enlightening influence of their spirits over succeeding ages, embraced nations within the compass of their affections, and, even against their will, raised them from degradation with a giant power. Such men the Divine Being has scattered sparingly in the world. They form not mere human and worldly institutions, but they supply what the necessities of our being require, and heaven permits them, like the stars of night, to shine in a sphere far exalted above their fellow men. They offer up their lives in order to carry into effect, to execute *that word and deed*, with which as a divine commission they have been intrusted—*animæ magnæ prodigi*. That Moses represented in this sense the genius of humanity there can be no doubt.

3. They also, who were his helpers for the accomplishment of his work were, filled with a portion of that spirit, which rested on him. "God took of the spirit of Moses and laid it

on them" according to the simple expression of the original. Nor was this great man envious of the favours imparted to them, but wished rather, that all the people were partakers of the same spirit. Thus were those men of prudence and understanding, who were to judge Israel, filled with the Spirit of God. So also the work-masters of the tabernacle, because by their art they contributed to the completion of his work. He expressed moreover the hope, that since the purpose of his law continued unaccomplished, a Prophet would be raised up like unto himself, who should carry his work forward to its ultimate perfection. All that contributed to the well being, to the illumination, the freedom and security of the people of Jehovah, was excited and organized for its end by the Spirit of Jehovah, as the examples of the Judges clearly prove. This may be regarded as a beautiful and striking peculiarity of the nation.

4. But as the noblest and best things of this world are liable to abuse, so also was the name of Prophet. *Oratores legis, advocati patriæ* it was their duty to be, and they became in process of time priests of Baal, false Prophets, so that Micah and Elijah found themselves in their times alone as witnesses of the God of truth, and Amos desires not to be denominated a Prophet. It was with his office, as it is with all offices so soon as they become a mere mechanical employment.

5. Again let no one create difficulties for himself neither in regard to prophetick visions, nor with respect to wonders and signs, as connected with prophetick history. Both were incidental and not indispensably necessary to the calling of a Prophet. The foregoing treatise has shown, that the Divine Being is represented with more and more traces of outward and sensuous magnificence the more debased the times became, and the more the human spirit needed the exciting influence of striking representations. As the word of God became less effectual by the simplicity of its inherent power and energy, it drew to itself more of the incidental and the external. And

finally we must interpret prophetick signs and wonders according to the *usus loquendi* of the East. Whatever is extraordinary and strikingly significant is denominated a sign, even a book, a writing, a poem, an artificial expression, how much more a remarkable event or exciting phenomenon of the times. To such the attention of these sages was directed, and when they addressed the people they placed them in the most striking light. They were the mouth of Providence, and saw and interpreted that which Providence exhibited to their view.

6. It is, moreover, a vain attempt to aim at penetrating and working ourselves into the subjective condition of the Prophets, when the spirit of the times has been so entirely changed. Among the Prophets themselves, the modes of inspiration were diverse, according to the particular age, in which they lived, and the peculiarities of the individual mind. How then shall we, or how can we, by all our distinctions, determine how the soul of Moses, of Elijah, of Isaiah was affected and conditioned by the prophetick spirit, which was imparted to it? We, who know indeed, scarcely more how it was with the subjective being of Pythagoras, of Calchas, or of Homer. If we knew this, why might we not form our own souls after the same model, and produce works, which, so far as their relation to the Divinity is concerned, might shame a Homer, an *Æschylus*, or a Pindar. What reverence for the Gods do we find in them, and here and there what sublimity and dignity, approaching almost to that of the Prophets!—It not only explains nothing to refer this to superstition, and that to a heated fancy, &c., but it prevents our contemplating and using their works in the right spirit; for in all that is referred to the so called power of imagination in them, there is much of wisdom. Let us leave to each Prophet and sage, the free enjoyment of his own individual style of representation, and of writing, as we must leave to him his age and its characteristic aims, while we employ the fruits of his spirit only, for the benefit of our own times.

### III.

#### DIVINE GUIDANCE IN THE DESERT.

**The History of Moses** considered as a subject for epick poetry. Its influence on the poetry of the Hebrews. Idomatick representations of deliverance out of great waters, of blooming deserts, and of the Shechinah. The 114th Psalm. 'Moses' triumphal song at the Red Sea. Appearance of God on Mount Sinai. Personification of the flames of fire upon the mountain, as a retinue of angels, as a warlike host, and as chariots of war. God of Sabaoth. Origin of this name. Its signification as extended in later times. The triumphal march of God as in the 68th Psalm. What we are to understand by the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud, and by the smoke and fiery splendours of Sinai. Whether the passage of the Israelites through the sea is a mythical representation. How it was applied by the Hebrews. Habakkuk's song of lamentation, accompanied with remarks.

It has been matter of wonder to me, that among so many heroick poems in our language on subjects of Hebrew history, we have yet none in which Moses is the hero. The deliverance of his people from bondage, and the forming of them to the purest system of religious worship, and the freest political organization of those early times, would be, as it seems to me, a nobler theme than the horrors and extravagances of war and knight errantry. The most ancient lawgiver, of which we have any knowledge, combined, in the organization of his work, ideas, which even at the present day, are in many respects still uncomprehended, and above our reach. The history of his life is full of the most remarkable vicissitudes. Born and brought up in Egypt, he went into voluntary exile from patriotick motives. His calling in the wilderness, the controversy of the God of his fathers with Pharaoh and the wise men of Egypt, the Exodus of the people, and their passage



through the sea, the pillars of fire and of a cloud, the giving of the law, the wonders wrought in Arabia, together with the distant view of the promised land; all this would furnish a subject, which, by the richness and variety of its materials derived from nature, art, religion, customs, and nations, and an accompaniment of the marvellous, that is at the same time full of nature, would almost of itself, assume the form of an epic, that is, of an ancient moral and heroic narrative. Yet, I would wish, by this brief exposition to excite to such an undertaking, not a German, but a German Hebrew. To him the subject is a national one. His more unbiassed and more early acquaintance with the poets of his nation, must give to the work more simplicity in his mind, than could be expected of a German scholar. We have the books of Moses, and if we leave out the genealogical registers and the incidental matters, and arrange in proper order those which are most original, in a style of poetical freedom, and simplicity, we need nothing farther to make a heroic poem of the deeds and laws of Moses, of the most ancient and authentic form.

Since we have already spoken of the calling of Moses, we will now proceed to treat briefly of his doings, of his conducting his people out of Egypt, his passage through the sea, and his journey through the Arabian desert. Obviously, this is the heroic age of Hebrew poetry. When the Psalms celebrate in formal order the whole series of the works of God, they commence, after the general work of creation, with the national benefits bestowed upon Israel, among which the deliverance out of Egypt, the journey through Arabia, and the conquest of Canaan hold the most distinguished place. The 104th—107th Psalms are all one, and upon this subject. Their division into distinct Psalms is only for the convenience of shorter divisions, and on account of the musick. In the 135th and 136th, which I consider more ancient than those before mentioned, this preference for the history of Moses is still more noticeable. They are undoubtedly, of the age of

Asaph and David, as is shown by the 68th and 78th, which very nearly resemble them. In the Prophets, the most favourite and almost all the figurative language throughout, is drawn from the times of this strange and remarkable history.

When Israel was a child,\*  
 Then I loved him and called him,  
 As my son out of Egypt.  
 Ephraim also I taught to go,  
 And took them by their arms,  
 In leading strings conducting them,  
 And led them as a child with care,  
 And took the yoke of bondage off.  
 I was thy God from Egypt forth,  
 'Thou knewest no other God,  
 And no deliver but me.  
 In the wilderness I fed thee,  
 There in their pastures were they full.  
 They were full, their heart was proud,  
 And they forgot their God.

The images here are all from the song of Moses, as also the affectionate designation of first born son is derived from his history. That Israel is the child of God, and chosen of him among all nations, is the favourite designation employed by Isaiah, from the 42d chapter to the end of the book. The highest interest of these passages escapes, when we neglect to bear in mind that primeval and wonderful history of the nation. I have often wondered why it was, that in the Psalms and Prophets we meet with so many images of the depths of the sea, from which God wrought deliverance, of streams, through which he is said to wade, while Canaan had so little immediate connexion with the sea. It is obvious, that these images are all derived from the Red Sea and the river Jordan, through which God in a miraculous manner conducted his people; and hence, the general image conveyed by this histor-

\* Hosea, xi.

ical fact became a customary and idiomatic expression. "He delivered me, he brought me up out of great waters," is in the writings of David the symbol used in relation to all dangers. Thus, among those, to which he applies it, he pictures the tempest and the helping hand of God, extended from the clouds. Commentators seem to me injudicious, when they seek always to refer these images to particular events in the history of his life. It was a received national symbol of deliverance, referred to, and deriving its import from the history of their marvellous triumphs. To the same origin are to be referred all those forms of expression, in which God is said to give this and that people for Israel, and to offer up nations for their sake. When the Prophet explains himself, it is always Egypt, that is given up for Israel, and the sacrifice of this he applies with effect to other cases. Similar remarks may be made in regard to the deserts, which God makes plains and fruitful fields; images in which were clothed even the return from captivity, and the delights of a coming golden age. I must go through a great, though perhaps, the most delightful part of Isaiah, and of other Prophets, if I would furnish all the rich examples that occur, to illustrate these views. We find extended, indeed, even to the future world the images derived from the deliverance out of Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Sechinah, which dwelt above them, and Canaan the object of their hopes, and in the Revelation of John, an exquisite abridgment of all the Prophets, they are exalted to the highest point of dignity. To a young man, who would understand the Psalms and Prophets in their true spirit, I might give it, indeed, as a general rule, superseding all others; "read Moses! read the Mosaic history!" A single word occurring in this poetry, often gives occasion for the finest poetical development through entire chapters. What Homer is to the Greeks, that Moses is in his relation to the Hebrews.

Of the plagues of Egypt we shall speak hereafter. At pre-

sent we shall only notice some of the triumphal songs, designed to celebrate the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the wonders connected with it.

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## A HEBREW ODE FROM THE HISTORY OF THE HEROIC AGE.

### THE 114th PSALM.

When Israel went from Egypt forth,  
 The house of Jacob from a strange people,  
 Then Judah was his sanctuary,  
 And Israel his dominion.  
     The sea beheld and fled,  
     Jordan was driven back,  
 The mountains leaped like rams,  
 The hills, they skipped like lambs.  
 What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest,  
 Thou Jordan that thou drewest back,  
 Ye mountains, that ye leaped like rams,  
 Ye hills, that ye skipped like lambs?  
 Before the Lord the earth did quake,  
 Before the presence of the God of Jacob,  
 Who turned the rock to living water,  
 The flinty stone to a flowing fountain.

This psalm is one of the finest odes in any language. The abrupt brevity, with which each particular is expressed, the astonished admiration ascribed to the sea, to Jordan, to the mountains, and hills, and repeated in the interrogatory form, the sublime explanation, that it all proceeded from a single glance of Jehovah, who looked upon them from the clouds, a look, which converted rocks and stones to streams and living fountains, all these give us, in the compass of this little ode, the substance of a long description.

The passage of the Red Sea produced the most ancient and sonorous song of triumph, which we have in this language. It is a choral ode, one voice describing perhaps the acts themselves, those of the chorus striking in and as it were re-echoing the sentiment. Its structure is simple, full of alliteration and rhyme, which I could not give in our language without doing violence to it, for the Hebrew, from the simplicity of its forms, is full of such harmonious correspondencies of sound. Flowing and prolonged words but few in number float upon the air, and terminate for the most part in an obscure monosyllabic sound, that formed perhaps the burden of the chorus. Here is a feeble imitation of the untranslatable but most ancient triumphal ode in any language.

#### SONG OF MOSES AT THE RED SEA.

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel  
 'This song unto the Lord,  
 And they spake saying,  
 I will sing unto the Lord,  
 For he hath triumphed gloriously,  
 'The horse and his rider hath he thrown  
 Into the depths of the sea.  
 The Lord is my strength and my song,  
 He is become my salvation.  
 He is my God and I will praise him,  
 My father's God, and I will exalt him,  
 Jehovah is a man of war,  
 Jehovah is his name.  
 Pharaoh's chariots and his host  
 Hath he cast into the sea,  
 'The choicest of his captains  
 Are sunk into the reedy sea.  
 The floods have covered them,  
 They sank into the depths,  
 Like a stone.  
 Thy right hand, O Jehovah,  
 Hath shown itself glorious in majesty,  
 Thy right hand, O Jehovah,

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Hath dashed in pieces the enemy.  
 By thine exalted power  
 Thou dashest those that rise against thee.  
 Thou sentest forth thy wrath,  
 It consumed them like stubble.

At the blast of thy nostrils,  
 The waters were gathered together.  
 The swelling flood stood up like heaps,  
 The waves were congealed  
 In the depths of the sea.

The enemy said I will pursue,  
 Will seize, will divide the spoil;  
 My soul shall glut itself with them,  
 My sword will I draw out,  
 And utterly destroy them.

Then breathed thy wind,  
 The sea covered them,  
 They sank as lead  
 In the mighty waters.

Who is like to thee O Lord!  
 Who, among the Gods?  
 Who is like thee glorious in holiness,  
 Fearful in praises, doing wonders.

Thou stretchedst out thy hand,  
 The earth swallowed them up.  
 With gentle hand thou leddest forth  
 The people which thou hadst redeemed.  
 Thou guidest them with strength  
 Unto thy holy habitation.

The nations hear thereof and tremble,  
 Grief seizes on the dwellers in Philistia,  
 The princes of Edom are amazed,  
 The heroes of Moab are seized with dread,  
 The dwellers in Canaan are melting away.

Let fear and dread fall upon them,  
 The terrors of death from thy mighty arm.  
 Let them be motionless as a stone,  
 Till thy people, O Lord, pass over,  
 Till thy people pass, whom thou hast redeemed.

Bring them in O Lord,  
 Plant thy people

Upon the mount of thine inheritance,  
 The place of thy habitation,  
 Which thou hast made ready for thyself,  
 The sanctuary, which thy hands have made.  
 Jehovah reigns forever and ever.

The song perhaps terminated here, and the following was only a brief recapitulation of the contents.

Forth marched the horse of Pharaoh and his chariots,  
 He went with his horsemen down into the sea.  
 Then brought Jehovah upon them  
 The returning waves of the sea.  
 The tribes of Israel passed dry  
 Through the midst of the sea.

So that these lines were a sort of brief memorial, such as every one might retain in memory concerning the whole event. If passages occur in this song such as we should suppose could not yet have been sung there, let it be borne in mind, that the temple, the sanctuary, and the land, to which they were journeying, were in the mind of God and of Moses already present, and that Moses by these anticipated as it were in triumph the institutions and regulations, which were to be formed.

This song, of which I have given but a feeble echo, gave their tone to the triumphal songs of the Hebrews, as the song of Deborah and the 68th Psalm evince. The rythmical movement is animated by the same cæsuras and cadences and by the same lively correspondencies of sound. The frequent exclamations, the oft recurring

Praise to Jehovah!  
 Sing praises to Jehovah!

the excitations addressed to the hearers, or the singers themselves, which at intervals interrupt, or rather animate the current of thoughts anew, form as it were the stave, on which

the historical song is arranged. In the Psalms the hallelujah grew out of this, as an animating and joyous shout of the chorus, known to many nations in nearly the same form, and by the Hebrews consecrated to their Jah or Jehovah.

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The appearance of God upon Sinai is in the simple description of Moses itself fearfully sublime,\* and it was therefore very naturally, that it became the subject of the most magnificent poetry. Moses had it distinctly in his thoughts, when he wrote his benedictions,† and here too he speaks as one holding close communion with God, who derived pleasure and instruction from things the most fearful. The most High in his majesty, and his hand armed with lightnings is in his conceptions a father, and the teacher of his assembled children. The sequel will develop this more fully. At present we remark only, that the appearance of God upon Mount Sinai gave occasion for personifications, which adorn the whole body of Hebrew poetry. The splendour and the burning radiance, in which God was manifested, became, in the language of poetry, angels, orders and retinues, in the midst of which the Law was given. Even David‡ formed them into a warlike encampment, and Daniel§ then made these ten thousand thousand around the most High servants obedient to his command. A series of Rabbinical subtilties, representing the Law as given and uttered forth by angels, is founded upon the same.

As Jehovah moved from Sinai in the character of a God of war, to fight for Israel, it was in accordance with it, that this host accompanied him. Thus, he appears in the song of Deborah, where the stars in battle array fought for Israel,§ and I doubt not that hence the exalted name of God, Jehovah Sabaoth, became a distinct and peculiar designation with the He-

\* Ex. xix. 20. † Deut. xxxiii. 2. ‡ Ps. xlvii 18,

|| Dan. vii. 10. § Jud. v. 4. 20.



brews. David used it first against the Philistines,\* and explained it as the name of the God of the armies of Israel, that is, of one who fought for Israel. It must then be from the ancient history of the nation, and from its songs of victory, and here Moses, Deborah, and numerous Psalms give the full explanation. It is, in fact, the name of Israel's God, as the God of war, only from the circumstance, that at that ancient period it proceeded from the glorious manifestations upon Mount Sinai; from the lightnings and thunderings, and from the starry hosts mingling in the conflict, and thus suggesting its primitive import, Jehovah of hosts. From this, its meaning became greatly extended, until at length, like all such poetical designations of the divinity when much used, it expressed all the amplitude of the Divine magnificence and excellency. In the later writings of the Prophets, therefore, it can no longer be translated with propriety, the God of war; though this was its primitive import. It is in their use a conception of universal elevation and dignity of character; and to the God of Sabaoth, the Lord of hosts, all in heaven and earth pay homage. This is the proper and domestick origin of the name, and with the gods of the Sabaeans it had nothing to do. When, moreover, the Prophets describe the stars as the host of God, they do so because the universe is full of his majesty. Moses, Deborah, David, and the Psalms, are the successive steps, by which they were elevated to their sublime conception. As an example and proof of this, let us observe how David applies God's leading of the Israelites in the wilderness to an object, in which one would not expect to find it; the bringing of the ark to Mount Zion. He goes through the whole progress of God from mountain to mountain, from victory to victory, and the triumphal song of Deborah was plainly his model. The Psalm might be denominated the march of Jehovah, an expression used by Habakkuk, and derived from this Psalm

\* 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

## THE VICTORIOUS MARCH OF GOD.

### THE 68TH PSALM.

Our God exalts himself,  
And his enemies are scattered,  
They that hate him flee before him.

[The triumphal language of Moses, with which he addressed the cloudy pillar, when the march of the people proceeded.]

As smoke disperses, so they disperse,  
As wax is melted before the fire,  
So shall the wicked perish at the presence of God.

[Smoke and fire were the symbols of the Divine presence during the march of the Israelites.]

But the righteous are glad,  
They rejoice before God,  
They exult with joy.

[Because he accompanies them in their march. Here the introduction of the ode terminates, and a second chorus perhaps commences.]

Sing praise to God ! extol his name !  
Prepare his way, who marcheth in the desert,  
Extol him by his name JAH,  
And exult before him.  
The orphan's father, the widow's judge,  
Is God exalted in holiness.  
Our God ! to the desolate  
He gave a habitation,  
He brought to happiness those who were bound,  
And the rebellious dwelt in a dry land.

[We may suppose the rebellious here to be Amalekites or Egyptians, who opposed themselves to the march of God. The desolate and those who were bound are the Israelites, whom he is leading out of bondage, and for whom he designs the rich land of Canaan. The other chorus now begins, and the march itself is described wholly in the language of Deborah.]

O God, when thou didst go forth,  
 And wentest before thy people,  
 When thou didst tread the desert,  
     Then the earth did quake ;  
 The heavens distilled in drops,  
 When God looked forth upon them,  
 This Sinai there before the face of God,  
 The God of Israel.  
 Thou, O God, didst send a gentle rain,  
 Thou didst revive thy parched inheritance,  
 Thy congregation can inhabit there.  
 For thou by thy goodness, O God !  
 Hast provided for the poor.

[To the last trait in the picture, the poet comes also through the description of Deborah. She painted the heavens as dropping, Sinai melting, in order to make a transition to the dropping of the clouds, which swelled the river Kishon and the Kadumim, and contributed to the victory. The gentle herdsman has here applied the heroic figure to a peaceful object, to make the wilderness a garden for the delightful habitation of the tribes of Israel. These, too, march onward, and war and victory follow.]

The Lord gave the signal for war,  
 A host were messengers\* of victory.  
     " The Kings of the hosts flee, they flee,  
 She that tarried at home divideth the spoil.  
     Why wait ye there among the water pots ?  
 The wings of the dove are covered with silver,

\* The noun in the original here is feminine.

Her feathers sparkle with yellow gold.  
 As the Almighty scattered the kings,  
 The snow descended upon Salmon."

These words were, perhaps, taken from an ancient triumphal song, which as usual, was also satirical. It related, obviously, to the victory of Deborah. In the Northern and woody part of Judæa their freedom was at that time recovered by Israel,\* the rainy season contributed to the victory, and mention was made also of the snow.† The news of the victory was intrusted to female messengers, because Deborah and Jael decided the battle, and it was not to be suffered, that the race in aftertimes should lose the memorial of Deborah, their heroic mother. The railery respecting those who remained behind is plainly from her triumphal song, only here introduced with a little subtilty and refinement. She upbraided the cowardly tribes with preferring to hear the bleating of their flocks, rather than the cry of battle; here it is imputed to them, that

\* Isa. ix. 1—3. is perhaps a play upon this passage.

† The words "snow fell on Salmon," pertain to the taunting expression of the triumphal song, and need no critical alteration. The tribes, which remained inactive, were afraid of the severe winter weather, which Deborah found so conducive to her success. When even the less elevated Mount Salmon, lying in the Southern part of Judæa, was covered with snow, how much more must it have been the case with the higher mountains of the North, whither the war-like expedition led them. This conclusion was sagaciously made by the Southern tribes, and they remained quietly with their doves. The spirit of the passage may be expressed as follows:

O ye who rest amid your folds,  
 What stays you loitering there,  
 To gaze upon your glossy doves  
 And mark their golden wings,  
 When God the Lord the nations smote?  
 And Canaan's heroes slew,  
 Then truly was a wintry day,  
 And snow on Salmon fell.

from timidity and an effeminate horror of war, they chose rather, in those raw and wintry days, to gaze with wonder upon the silvery wings and golden feathers of their doves, gleaming as they rise in flight, while Deborah, a woman, a dweller in the house, (a bee as the name signifies) is dividing the spoil. "The Lord gave the word," means he gave command for the war, he roused up heroes and so the messengers of victory.

Next follows the march of Jehovah upon the mountains. He descended upon the diminutive Zion, and how many more beautiful and more fruitful mountains were there, that were desirous of this honour. The fertile Bashan he had passed by, and here that mountain, which was one of the greatest in the land of Israel, draws the attention of the poet, and becomes the object of his song.

Thou mount of God, mount Bashan,  
 The mountain range, mount Bashan,  
 Why look with pride,\* ye pinnacled heights,  
 On these, which God hath chosen to dwell in?  
 Jehovah shall inhabit them  
 Forever and ever.

[The account is equally balanced with praise and sarcasm. Bashan is named, because it was situated beyond Jordan, and God could not dwell there, because it was without the limits of the promised land.—Zion was recently gained by conquest, and the remnant of the Jebusites was perhaps still in Jerusalem. Then too God dwelt in the vicinity of his conquered foes—a circumstance, which gave occasion to the sublime picture of his victorious progress, after he moved forward from Sinai.]

\* More correctly "with envy." The Hebrew term, that occurs in the same form only in this passage, means to regard with envy. In this sense the passage may be translated thus:

Why look so enviously down ye mountain ranges,  
 Upon this mount, which God has chose to dwell in,  
 This expresses the *εφύλαττε* of Aquila and Theodotian.

The chariots of God, a thousand thousand,  
 And ten times ten thousand more.  
 The Lord comes forth in their midst,  
 From the glory crowned summit of Sinai.

Thou didst raise the chariots aloft,  
 Thou leddest forth thy captives with thee,  
 Thou gavest men for thy triumphal gifts,  
 And madest rebels now to dwell with thee.  
 Jehovah, God.

Let God be praised, from day to night be praised,  
 He layeth on our burdens, and giveth us help,  
 He is our God, the God of our salvation,  
 Jehovah the Lord hath the issues to death.

Surely God will wound the head of his enemies,  
 The hairy scalp of him, who is against him.  
 I will bring him, saith the Lord, from Bashan,  
 I will bring him from the depths of the sea.  
 Thy foot shall yet wade in their blood,  
 Thy dogs lick the blood of thine enemies!—

But I have already given more perhaps, than was necessary for our present purpose. We see clearly what this difficult Psalm, abounding in proud and warlike sentiment, means by the triumphal gifts of God among men, and what the national God of the Israelites will do farther on the mountains, which he has newly conquered, that he will free them from those enemies, who now remain only as a kind of sin-offering. But we return to our subject and ask,

What meant that smoking Sinai?

What were those pillars of cloud and fire?

which gave occasion to such splendid imagery.

Respecting the fiery and cloudy pillars we need not be greatly at a loss. It was the sacred fire, which, as was customary in similar cases in those regions, was carried before the host, and served both as a signal for breaking up the encampments and renewing the march, and as a guide in their journeying. When the Israelites went out of Egypt it followed and stood

between them and the Egyptians. I remember to have read even in some Pagan writer, what originated probably in a misconception of this circumstance, that the flying people placed between them and their pursuers objects of religious veneration, I think sacred animals, which the Egyptians dared not approach. It is in the Exodus of the children of Israel, that those cloudy and fiery pillars first occur, and they are at once accompanied with miraculous effects, which still followed them throughout the journey.\* When the host were encamped, it stood before the door of the sanctuary, before the tent of the leader, and responses were given by it. When the host moved their camp, it went before as their guide. They continue to appear, so long as the Israelites were in the desert, but when they arrived in Canaan the Ark of the Covenant preceded, and showed the way, and these pillars are no longer mentioned. In short the phenomenon was a symbol of the Divinity, though with the Israelites not a mere symbol, but a presence, which produced marvellous and sometimes fearful effects. The two phenomena admit of being so naturally identified, that I see not why they should be considered as different. In the one symbol God would accompany Israel, and be their guide. This was the angel of his presence that is the herald and index of his peculiar presence and superintendence, and all this was included under the pillar of fire. By day it appeared as smoke, in the night as flame. Before it was the most revered seat of judgment, the highest tribunal. If Moses and Aaron were safe no where else, they were yet safe here, and the fire of God avenged them in a way that was manifest to the sense. When the journey was ended, the memorial of it was perhaps placed in the holy of holies, and for some time preserved; and hence the Jewish fable respecting the perpetual cloud of smoke between the cherubim. Nothing is more natural and accordant with history, than this

\* Ex. xiv. 19, 20, xxxiii. 9—11. Num. ix. 15—23,

explanation. It denies no miracle and only shows the medium, by which God wrought miracles, since this must be the angel of his presence, or, as Habakkuk calls it, the veil of his presence.

The splendid appearances on mount Sinai had very possibly similar natural causes, pertaining to the time and place, in which they were exhibited, for God works no miracles except through the instrumentality of natural powers. The extraordinary splendour, in which the sandy deserts of Arabia sometimes appear, the smoke, in which the mountains are veiled, the thunders, which are multiplied and fearfully reverberated among their towering cliffs, those and perhaps other terrific and magnificent phenomena of nature God on this occasion combined together, as the symbols and manifestations of his presence. Whoever would deny the miraculous character of the phenomena, must make the description of Moses a fable. Nor are they less so from the fact, that this region of fearful desolation is always fruitful in strange and startling phenomena.

Finally the passage through the Red Sea with the circumstances described as attending it was certainly a marvellous but not an impossible rescue. Probably Moses, when he received his commission, intended to direct his course over the isthmus. The Israelites could not moreover have been much below it, and they probably passed by Suez somewhat farther South, than the route which the caravans now take. Now though the gulf then extended according to remaining traces of it higher up than now, yet it was so wide as readily to account for the result. Losing the route in the darkness of the night, confounded by a tempest of rain and a storm of wind, and panick struck, the whole host of Egyptians might well fall into disorder, and lose themselves beyond the possibility of escape, whether falling into the deeper bays of the sea, or from the higher incursion of the driving and overwhelming flood. Nor is the passage here so broad, that it would be im-



possible for the Israelites to accomplish it in a single night. All the doubts, which have recently been accumulated respecting the matter, are overstrained. The ancient monuments of the Israelites, the feast which was established as a memorial of this passage over the sea, the triumphal song of Moses, and the numerous exhortations, which he enforced upon the assembled Israelites by a reference to it, show clearly enough, that their deliverance was at all events attended with very remarkable and terrific circumstances, which Moses has described too in a manner perfectly natural, and accordant with the local character and relations of the place.

Would that our devotional songs, in which reference is made to this event had more resemblance to the Hebrew! These do not repeat it, though it was to them a national blessing, and the very ground of their national existence, in endless litanies, as we often do, but adapt the ancient event to new occurrences, combine it intimately with their subject, and sing it, if I may be allowed the expression, in a business like manner. Thus Deborah, and thus also several fine Psalms and passages in the Prophets. Let us now read for an example one of the most touching poems of the Hebrews, in which the boldest triumphal picture of the old world terminates in the most affecting elegy.

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#### THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK THE PROPHET.

O Jehovah, I have heard the rumour of thee ;  
And tremble with fear ;\*

\* The rumour, which the Prophet heard, was the tradition of the marvellous events of ancient times, and the predictions of what was then to take place. Once God strove for his people, now he would forsake them, and give them over to their enemies. Both of these are enlarged upon in the piece, and the Prophet longs to see the purpose of God in this sad catastrophe. This is what is expressed in the petition, "show thy work, make known with the progress of years what thou hast purposed, and in thy present severe counsels call to mind thine ancient miracles of goodness to this people.

With coming years, Jehovah, show thy work,\*  
 As years revolve make known,  
 In wrath remember mercy.

When God came on from Teman,  
 The high and holy one from Mount Paran,  
 His glory covered the heavens,  
 The earth was full of his praise.

His brightness was like the sun,  
 Out from his hand the rays shot forth,  
 And this was but the veil of his might.

Before him went the pestilence,  
 Birds of prey flew forth at his feet.  
 He stood, the earth was moved, †  
 He looked; and nations were scattered abroad,  
 The everlasting mountains were trod to dust,  
 The perpetual hills did bow themselves,  
 When he marched forth of old. ‡

The huts of Cushan I saw in affliction, §  
 The tents of Midian vanished away.

Was Jehovah angry with the rivers?  
 Was the blast of thy breath at the waves?

\* The parallelism seems to require, this of the common reading, "revive thy work." Perhaps the poet had in his thoughts, Ps. xc. 13—17. and then the haste, and the calling for his work to be manifested is not unsuited to the context. The poet was desirous of seeing the approaching developments, and was admonished, chapter ii. 3. 4. to wait with patience. Here, then, he prays, as Moses did, that God would revive and carry forward his work.

† Several translations give this sense, and the parallelism obviously requires it. The nations flee away at the violent shaking of the earth.

‡ The "goings forth of old are" from the 68th Psalm, which gives to this often misapprehended expression the most intelligible sense. It is the march of God in ancient times, his stepping from mountain to mountain, (Sinai, Seir, Paran, Bashan) which so many ancient triumphal songs, and this elegy also describe.

§ They labour as it were under affliction. They strip off the coverings of their tents, so that a whole encampment of Nomades disappears in a few moments.

Was thy wrath against the sea ?\*  
 For thou didst mount upon thy war-chariot,  
 And ride with horses, thou God of salvation,  
 Thou drewest forth thy bow,  
 Multiplying sevenfold thine arrows.†  
 And the streams cleft asunder the land.  
 The mountains saw thee and trembled,

\* The peculiar turn of this question shows the alarm of the speaker, and gives a sublime movement to the ode. Several Psalms interrupt the narrative by such unexpected questions, as Ps. cxiv. 5. 6. and others, a striking peculiarity in the style of Oriental poetry.

† This line, which is a *crux criticorum*, only becomes intelligible in the sense, which I have given. But if we adopt this, what is the meaning of "word"? If we translate the passage—

Thou drewest forth thy bow,  
 The arrows of the commander were satiate with blood,

still to every reader of nice discernment, the connexion will appear harsh. The fact here assumed, that God is so suddenly called the "word," while through the whole ode he does not speak as an inactive commander, but is himself active as a warrior, that his arrows are already satiate with blood, while in the progress of the description this is first mentioned afterwards in verse 13th, all this renders this construction unnatural. I have, therefore, by a very simple construction read this word as a participle. That it often means "to make manifold" is well known, and thus, this difficult passage, seems to me, to be explained in the simplest way, and very finely in accordance with the scope of the imagery. The multiplying of the lightnings as glittering arrows is an image sufficiently known from the 18th Psalm, and this is followed by the Prophet in this passage.

But how comes it, that now, when God draws out his arrows with his bow, the rivers also rush through the land? If the reader proceeds farther on, he will see that a universal shuddering and alarm of nature is described, such as we remark before a tempest. It is as if all things felt the presence and immediate vicinity of the Creator. The river rolls on more rapidly, and as here the floods sound louder, the heights lift up their hands in expectation. There is no doubt, that all these figures refer to the Red Sea, to Jordan, to Sinai, and to the times of Joshua and Debo-

The overflowing waters fled away,

The deep uttered its voice.

The heights lift up their hands.

The sun and moon stood still in their course,\*

At the dazzling light of thine arrows flying,

At the lightning glance of thy spear.

Thou marchedst on in anger through the land,†

And trampledst upon the nations in thy wrath.

rah, when the rivers either shrunk back or overflowed; but all are combined into one picture, and hence, to follow out chronologically and historically, every minute feature is incorrect. It is plainly a continuous representation of a coming warrior, and of his deeds in battle. The image of the alarmed and troubled waters, which are sensible of the nearness of God, is derived from the majestic 77th Psalm v. 17—21. whose images Ihabakkuk has in several passages adopted and enlarged.

\* The image of the sun and moon are taken from both the history of Joshua and the song of Deborah combined together. In the former they stand still with astonishment, while God is engaged in battle; in the latter courses are ascribed to them. Should not the same Hebrew word, which Deborah uses, have stood here also, putting it in the singular only as the common reading is? The Septuagint seems to have read thus; since it translates ἐν τῇ ταῖς ἐξελαυ' τῆς just as in Judges v. 20. and the picture thereby becomes beautiful, complete, and full of action. They stand still with astonishment in the midst of their course, and upon the smooth path, which they are ever travelling. They see the glance of his lightnings, and are, as it were, ashamed, and thrown in the shade.

† The picture is progressive. God does not here first go forth upon the land. The first step of his progress was already described in the 6th verse. Here he is proceeding onward and trampling upon nations at every step. The poet advances also with the progress of the national history, and comes down to the kings, especially the age of David, as the 13th verse clearly shows. Hence, too, the images in the succeeding verses are from the triumphal songs of David. The 13th and 14th are obviously from Ps. lxxviii. 22. and Ps. cx. 6. and other passages, since David often uses the peculiar expression, "to wound or divide asunder the head."

For thou wentest forth to aid thy people,  
To bring salvation to thine anointed.

Thou didst smite the top from the house of the wicked\*  
And lay bare the foundation even to the rock,  
Thou piercedst the head of the leader of their ranks,†  
They were rushing as a storm to disperse me,  
Exulting as if to devour the oppressed,  
Like the wild beast in his covert.  
Then did thine horses tread upon the sea,  
They came upon the swelling floods.‡

\* The figure is taken from a house or temple, whose summit being dashed in pieces, it will be made bare and fall to ruins even to the foundation stone, which is laid upon a rock. That the word "head" is often thus used, especially in the Psalms, I need not show. The dilapidation of the house means, according to Oriental custom, the ruin of the whole family. It need not be asked to what enemies of David the poet had reference in this passage. The images are here introduced into the picture in their general application. The particular circumstances of the more ancient times, did not belong to the purpose of the writer.

† Various conjectures have been made respecting the original word here. Its first meaning, as it seems to me, is *ranks*, families, or members of families divided off, as its radical form signifies. In the song of Deborah (Jud. v. 7.), it is either villages, or assemblages from villages out of their districts, in short, orders. Here there were regular ranks of enemies, who according to the following versc, came on like a tempest, to scatter a defenceless people and divide the spoil. The Greek translation gives the collective form, leaders of such ranks or divisions (*κεφαλαις δυνασιων*), as names of dignity are used in all languages. I have used some circumlocution in translating the word, because by this means, the succeeding image becomes more clear, and when compared with chap. i. 9. will need, I think, no farther elucidation.

‡ To bring them aid, that is, as the 8th and 12th verses show. The picture ends as it began, which is a striking beauty, since it gives unity to the whole view. As well in this part as in the whole economy of the ode, this poem is beautifully filled up.

When I heard this my heart trembled,\*  
 My lips quivered at the voice.  
 A shuddering ran through my bones,  
 And my feet were tottering.  
 Yet must I rest until the day of calamity,†  
 When the destroying nation cometh upon us.  
 Then shall the fig-tree not bloom,  
 And the vines shall give no fruit.  
 The hope of the olive tree shall fail,  
 The fields shall yield no bread,  
 The flock shall be cut off from the fold,  
 And no herd shall be in the stall.  
 Yet will I be confident in Jehovah,‡

\* Now another division of the ode commences, which again refers back to the beginning, verse 1st. The poet has heard from the ancient times all the wonders, which God wrought for Israel, and now sees other times no less fearful approaching. This makes the plan of the ode apparently incomprehensible and contradictory, as well as the feelings expressed in it. The preceding chapters are the best commentary upon it, especially chap. i. 1. 2. 12—14. chap. ii. 1—4.

† The leading word here is explained by the history of the Prophet, chap. ii. 1—4. He was directed by God to remain tranquil; he must wait for the time. This he now calls "resting and waiting for the day of calamity," when the nation invaded them, which he described in chap. 1st. He does not here speak of a going up to Chaldæa, but of a coming of the Chaldæans; as the following verse clearly shows. The following lines describe the entire desolation of the country, by the Chaldees.

‡ Here the ode draws to a conclusion. Dark and discouraging as it is around him, the Prophet yet remains true to the word of his God, (Chap. i. 1—4.) he gives himself up to him, and leaps with joy in the name of his whole nation. It must, and will have a good result for them, though the Prophet does not yet see, and though he so strongly desires to see it, is the leading subject of his prophecy. (Sec Chap. i. 2. 3. 12—17. Chap. i. 1—4. Chap. iii. 2.). The plan of the whole book is no less a beautiful whole, than this ode by itself, which I might justly call the crown of the Hebrew lyric Poetry. That in the last verse there is a reference to Ps. viii. 34. and Deut. xxxiii. 29. I need not show. David applied the last mentioned passage to himself, and the Prophet refers it to the whole nation. It will yet, once more ascend upon its ancient heights, the scenes

And exult in the God of my salvation,  
 Jehovah God is my strength,  
 He will make me to leap as the hart,  
 And to tread again upon my high places.

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## APPENDIX.\*

Of the miracles in the Journeying of the Israelites, and the giving of the Mosaick law.

“ Must not the whole description of this march through the Arabian deserts be a sort of epick poem of later date, and produced at a period, when the truth of history was already clothed in the marvels of fiction ?” So far as my purpose is concerned it would make no difference though it were even so : for still this history remains the basis of Hebrew legislation and poetry. But what ground have we to believe this ? Let one read the description impartially, and observe its entire simplicity, its local references, its precise correspondence and propriety in the circumstances of time and place. Every new book of travels has confirmed or illustrated its local truth, and even to the present day the traditions of the neighbouring nations and races are full of this ancient history. I am aware, that the Mohanmedan religion has in a peculiar manner revived these traditions ; it however, only revived and built upon them, for they were before already there. The lonely desert

of victory and leap upon them like a hart. Judæa was a mountainous country, and hence, of the Chaldeans also, (ver. 16.) the word ‘high places,’ is used. The conclusion of the ode is patriotick, beautiful, and dignified. All the feelings and fortunes of his people, prosperity and adversity, the poet experiences in his own breast.

\* This short treatise and a metrical paraphrase of the prayer of Habakkuk, are found among Herder’s manuscripts, and were inserted here by the first editor, J. G. Mueller. J.

seems to be designed for the purpose, that in it this history might survive, as well in the memorials of nature, as in the traditions of the people.

If a poetical aim were discoverable in the narrative of Moses as in that of Homer, and if we saw in it events combined and adorned for the accomplishment of this aim, while at the same time, it was incompatible with the truth of nature ; then it might be seen distinctly in the Arabian desert, as well as on the plains of Troy, where fiction begins and history ends. The fiction would show itself by a reference to the purpose, to which it was directed.

Now, in Moses, nothing of this sort is perceivable. The description of the passage of the Red Sea, does not grow out of the ode, that was sung for its celebration, but obviously precedes it, as a perfectly artless geographical description. The giving of the law on Mount Sinai is told in a style of simple narrative. Whatever is sublime and terrifick in it belongs to the subject, not to the language. So it is with the most fearful as well as the agreeable incidents of the journey. They fall as artlessly into the general train of events, and the course of the narrative, as does the long description of the arrangements of the tabernacle, of the laws, the sacred rites and vestments, all of which are certainly historical monuments of that age.

Why then should we give credence to the one and not to the other ? Why must we insist that all things shall proceed in every age, as they do in our own ? There a system of doctrine and legislation was to be established, which has extended its power over nations and centuries. Could Moses, unaided with all his Egyptian wisdom, or even with the added wisdom of his Levites, accomplish this ? Could he do it against the opposition of some hundred thousand stiff-necked and rebellious men ? And how could he sustain them so long in the desert ? Let him who has any doubts here give a plan to show how it might be done ; but let the whole be placed between



**Sinai and Paran, and suited to that age and to the same people.**

Yet nobody requires us on the authority of Moses : 1. to believe fables, of which the history knows nothing, and which the later Rabbins have invented, respecting the manna, the cloudy pillars, the angels by whose ministration the law was given, &c. either from childish interpretations or for moral purposes. Rather,

2. Since there is one God, the Lord of nature, and of these miraculous phenomena, all these must have taken place and are to be explained through the instrumentality of natural causes. Theophrastus, Pliny and others have also spoken of the manna, as this far more ancient description does, and the account is perfectly in accordance with the knowledge and views of nature, which pertained to that age. The atmospheric phenomena of the country among the mountains of Arabia are alike known. Of the stifling wind Simoom, the avenging messenger of the Lord, the phenomena of the East wind, in which all objects appear magnified, and the sandy desert looks like a sea of fire, the same may be said. It is a fearful solitude of nature, formed as it were, for producing the sublimae impressions of fear and implicit obedience.

3. But so far as discoveries have yet been made, and have come within my own knowledge, no miracle of Israelitish history can be fully explained on these principles. There are no oak forests in those regions, from the manna of which so great a multitude could have subsisted in its wanderings, and the Israelites had as much sense as we have to consider, that they had not known in Egypt what was a natural thunder storm.

4. Finally, it is remarkable that the place of all these miraculous events lay out of the limits of Canaan ; and had, therefore, no influence on the observance of the law. Sinai was not in Canaan, and in danger from some supposed sacredness of the place of being revered, as the dwelling place of God. They saw the tempests sweep over, and on them the Lord of the tempest ; but in Canaan he rested in his career

upon no mountain summit. The history remained what it was, ancient history, and if an Elijah sometimes fled thither to console and strengthen himself by the fortunes of Moses, yet the place, as an object of popular superstition, was not laid down in the map of Moses. It was never sent to for the purpose of obtaining oracular responses, and on the same ground the places consecrated in the history of the Patriarchs, Mamre, Luz, Bethel, could never become places of idolatrous worship. When Bethel from political causes was becoming such, the Prophet changed its name Bethel, (house of God) into Beth-aven (house of idolatry). It must, however, be admitted in regard to the marvellous and supernatural in the Hebrew legislation, that it was perverted to superstitious uses, which for centuries held the minds of the people in fetters, though it did not differ in this respect from other religions.

**NOTE.** I have ventured to omit here the metrical paraphrase of the Prayer of Habakkuk mentioned in a previous note. T'r.

#### IV.

#### INSTITUTIONS OF MOSES.

Of the name Jehovah; what it involved; and how far its import was unfolded. The 90th and 102d Psalms. Pure and uncorrupted ideas of God, of moral truths, and of practical wisdom in the poetry of the Hebrews. Legislation of Moses.

1. The national freedom and equality established by it. National assemblies at their festivals. Songs which they sung with national pride and exultation.
2. Jehovah was enthroned upon the laws alone. National songs respecting this with an application even to oppressors and unjust judges. The laws were compared with the ordinances of God in nature. An ode to this effect.
3. Office and dignity of the tribes set apart to his service. Of the light and law of rectitude upon the breast of the high priest. Images drawn from the attire of the priests in Hebrew poetry. They are symbols of a flourishing state. Application of them to kings and to heavenly ministers.
4. Origin and purpose of sacrifices. Moral use of them in poetry. Examples in several Psalms.

General remarks on the language derived from the laws of Moses respecting diseases and vices, and on particular parts of the religious service and symbolical observances. The institution of the sabbath has preserved for us all that remains of their ancient history and poetry. Images drawn from it of a perpetual sabbath and the year of jubilee. The Tabernacle of Moses a symbolical representation.

Jehovah was the name which Moses impressed upon his people as the name of the God of their fathers. It expressed a pure and sublime conception,\* which imported the immovableness and truth of God, his eternity, his unchangeableness and his eternal worth and glory. This fundamental concep-

It confessedly involved the three relations of time, "I was, I am, I shall be," or as God himself says, "I am in that I am."

tion in the law of Moses is denominated the holiness of the Lord,\* an expression, for which I know no synonym in the German language. Not only were all images and representations of God drawn from the works of creation prohibited, but this sacred name was the occasion for unfolding the highest attributes and perfections of the Godhead, which were to serve as an eternal and immutable basis for the reason and religion of man. It is not intended by this to say, that Moses himself unfolded all these perfections. To him, the lawgiver of the Israelites, God must appear and be represented more especially as the guardian God of Israel, and on this conception are grounded many forcible and striking passages of his admonitions and of his songs. But what he as a lawgiver could not do, was done afterwards by the wise men and poets of Israel. Was Jehovah the one only God, the creator of the world, so was he also the God of all nations, and of all generations of men, and for the unfolding of this rich and fruitful gem these needed but time, unbiassed thought, and the calm Spirit of God. It is not here the question, whether other nations have also unfolded the same ideas. For why need we be envious, and refuse to give the Persians, Hindoos, Celts or whomsoever it may be, credit each in their proper measure for the degree, in which they have preserved and advanced the most ancient religion of the earth. It is enough, that in that age, and in that part of the world, among Egyptians, Canaanites, and the uncultivated tribes of Arabia, Moses was alone in his advancement. He sought out the religion of the Patriarchs, the ancestors of his race, and what he derived from Egypt in the outward form and costume of his institutions and laws was not permitted to obscure the pure light of that revelation, which was given him in the burning bush of the Arabian desert. Thus with the progress of time were formed those sublime ideas, which we find in the Psalms and Prophets.

\*The holiness of the Lord is his highest peculiarity, in which he has none like him,

To illustrate this we may begin with the ode, which is ascribed to Moses himself as its author. It unfolds the name Jehovah, that is, the immutable truth, the eternal and absolute immobility and constancy of the creator of the world.

### A SONG OF MOSES, THE MAN OF GOD.

#### THE 90th PSALM.

O Lord ! Thou alone art our steadfastness  
 From generation to generation !\*  
 Before the mountains were generated,  
 Or the earth and the world upheaved them,  
 From eternity to eternity thou art God. †  
 Thou lettest man return to the dust,  
 And sayest, return, ye generations of men.  
 For a thousand years are in thy sight  
 But as yesterday when it is past,  
 As a watch of the night.  
 Thou lettest them pass away.  
 There are they in a dead sleep,  
 In the morning they were as the green grass,  
 In the morning it was green and flourishing,  
 In the evening it was parched and dried up.  
 So thou didst consume us by thy breath,  
 The blast of thine anger drives us away.  
 Thou placedst our iniquities before thee,  
 Our secret sins came to light  
 Before thy view.  
 Therefore have our days passed away,  
 By thy sentence upon us ; ‡  
 We waste our years away,  
 Like an idle tale.  
 The days of our life are seventy years,  
 And if in its strength they be four score years,

\*How sublime an idea ! We are but in appearance, mere fleeting shadows upon the earth. Only in God is our steadfastness. He is our true being, whom Moses so often calls a rock.

†In all past ages, Thou, Lord, hast been.

‡Gen. vi. 5 or the decree of God, that all the Israelites should perish in the desert.

Yet its whole extent is toil and pain,  
It is quickly past, and we are gone.

If the name Jehovah had occasioned the productions only of the sublime exposition in Isaiah from the 40th chapter onward, we should have abundant cause to bless the memory and the religion of Moses.

There is no attribute, no perfection of God, which did not find its most simple and powerful expression in the Psalms and Prophets, and for the most part these sublime developments of thought are drawn from the name Jehovah, which is in fact the ground of all natural theology. Never can I read without emotion the Psalm\* of that suppliant, who on account of his great age, could not hope to witness the fulfilment of his wishes respecting Jerusalem and his people. He fails and sinks in the midst of his way, with his eye directed to the promise, but God the promiser fails not, and another generation will live to witness its accomplishment, for God is Jehovah.

My days decline as a shadow,  
And I am withered like grass,  
But thou, O Jehovah, reignest forever,  
Thy name endureth from age to age.  
Therefore for generations to come it is written,  
A nation yet unborn shall praise the Lord.  
He will look down from his holy heights,  
From heaven will Jehovah look upon the earth,  
And hear the groaning of the prisoners,  
And deliver those that are condemned to death.  
Then shall they praise in Zion the might of Jehovah,  
Then shall his praise be sounded in Jerusalem;  
When the people shall be gathered together,  
And kingdoms for the service of Jehovah.  
My strength indeed fails, ere I attain it,  
And my days are shortend.  
I said also; my God, take me not away  
In the midst of my life.—

Yet thy years go on from age to age,  
 Thou it is, who of old hast founded the world,  
 The heavens also are the work of thy hands,  
 They too perish, but thou abidest,  
 They become old like a garment.  
 As a garment thou layest them aside,  
 And new heavens are brought forth,  
 But thou art the same,  
 And thy years have no end.  
 The children of thy servants also shall continue,  
 And their generations shall flourish before thee.

Thus are always the most sublime attributes of God intimately associated with the most tender sensibilities of human nature. The omniscience, the omnipresence, the infinite wisdom, the particular care and providence of God are represented in the Psalms and Prophets with such a sense of reality and inwardness, that one cannot escape the consciousness of being under the immediate eye of God. If the doctrines of the purest Theism were to be expressed in the strongest terms, the language should be taken from the Old Testament.

He that hath made the eye, shall he not see ?  
 He that hath planted the ear, shall he not hear ?  
 Consider yet, ye brutish among the people,  
 Ye senseless fools, when will ye be wise ?

Can any thing more to the purpose, even in our own day, be said against that class of philosophers, who deny the evidences of design in nature? All, which they ascribe to an abstract and lifeless nature, the heathen idolaters referred to their false Gods, and what the Prophets urge against the one holds equally against the other. The purer philosophy and theology any poetry contains, the more nearly, not only in its general sentiments, but even in its expressions, will it approach to the poetry of the Old Testament.

Nearly the same thing is true also in regard the doctrines of morality, only we must not treat of these in the sense, in

which they were practised by the people, but as they ought to be practised. Neither must we look for these in the passages, in which they are limited by the particular aims of the political lawgiver, or the teacher of worldly prudence, but where they are uttered by the sage and the poet. In his positive institutions Moses could only speak in terms suited to his age, to his people, and to their apprehension, and it would be folly to demand of him more than this. Yet the law, which he gave them, was too spiritual and too good for the Israelites, since they had neither power nor inclination to observe it. But where Moses speaks as a monitor and teacher of the people, especially in his last appeal to them, what sublime sentiments does he introduce!

Understand, O Israel,  
 Jehovah, thy God, is one Jehovah,  
 And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God,  
 With all thy heart,  
 With all thy soul,  
 And with all thy strength!  
 —The word, that I command thee this day,  
 Is not a dark saying, and far from thee,  
 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say,  
 Who shall ascend and bring it down for us;  
 Nor beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say,  
 Who shall go over the sea for us,  
 And bring it to us, and cause us to hear,  
 That we may understand and do it.  
 For the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and heart,  
 That thou mayest do it !\*

David in his personal conduct may be as he will; he may even in many of his Psalms appear selfish and ambitious of fame, cruel and misanthropick, yet in the presence of Jehovah he dares not boast himself of any other than praiseworthy qualities, of strict integrity, and openness of heart. All those

\* Deut. vi. 4. xxx. 11.



Psalms of his, which contain general instruction, and still more those of Asaph and of an anonymous author are full of the purest doctrines of morality. The Proverbs of Solomon contain much of the court-morality of the Orientals, for they teach strictly speaking the maxims of prudence rather than the abstract principles of morality. Yet, even in them, there is much of pure gold, and they lay the foundation of all the maxims of life in the fear of Jehovah. The Prophets in the fulness and clearness of their teachings go far before most of the Gnomic poets of the Greeks, and the book of Sirach is a blooming garden, full of instruction and precept, of imagery also and of parables and descriptive representations. In short, it may be said, of the law of Moses, in the language of this book, "Wisdom has flown from it as Pishon, as Tigris, as the Euphrates and the Nile, when it overflows and waters the land."

The Legislation of Moses had for its purpose the formation of a free people, subject to none but the law; and that no one might deprive them of their liberty God was himself the giver of the law, its guardian, and the king of his people. He dwelt in the midst of them and the much abused word, "temple," properly designated a house for the book of the law, over which God was himself the guardian. The whole people constituted a priestly kingdom; and every one was a servant of the same king and of his law. "Thou shalt be to me a priestly kingdom," was the first principle, in which Moses comprehended the character of his legislation. If we would not call this a theocracy, we may denominate it a nomocracy. But in reference to the poetry, that grew out of it, and in accordance with the truth of those ancient times and their history, the term theocracy, is far more expressive and beautiful. All poetry, which related to the political organization, and the service of God, was theocratic. Let us consider what constituted its specific character,

First; *The honours of the tribes, equality of national rights, and liberty.* No provision was made for a king in the legislation of Moses; God and his law were alone king. All the tribes were one people, descendants of the patriarchs, from whom they had received as an inheritance their knowledge of God, and with it the rights of fraternal relationship and even of the priesthood, which, according to Egyptian notions, were the highest in rank. To this purpose was introduced the rite of circumcision, a distinction, which in Egypt was confined to the priesthood, and was here (though through the Romans and Gentile nations it has become a reproach) to be a national honour. All the tribes were ranged under their princes, and every family under its head, so that all the fraternal members were connected together, subject to the tribunal, which exercised jurisdiction over all. Three times in the year, at the great national festivals, there was a general assembling of the people. They came together not to hear sermons or mass for seven days, but to rejoice together in their community of privileges, and to feel that, as the people of God, they were one people. All their three great festivals were national, and associated with liberty. The passover was a memorial of the day which made them a free people; the feast of pentecost of the law, by which that freedom was confirmed; and the feast of tabernacles, of its enjoyment in their first simple dwellings and unrestrained family intercourse. All the festivals abounded in sacrificial feasts, in musick, songs and dances. The people of God in the presence of their invisible Lord, and before the tabernacle, in which his law was deposited, could not but be a rejoicing people. By these assemblages their national pride, that is, their delight in Jehovah, the fraternal relationship of the several tribes, who all had but one Jehovah, one invisible king, one law, one temple, were awakened and cherished, and by their social participation of the feast and song, the origin of the nation, the history and memorials of their patriarchs, were preserved, and remained al-

ways fresh in their minds. When we use the words, sacred feast, temple, festivals, Psalms, we either form no clear conception, or at least, a cold, cheerless and lifeless one, because we have ourselves no national festivals, and songs of public rejoicing, no temple associated with the glory of our fathers, no law for the universal security of our national freedom. Hence, the Psalms, which are filled with this spirit, are so often contemplated by us without emotion or sympathy. No people can have a national poetry, that has not objects of general pride and gratulation, in which all have a community of interest; much less, when nourished up in opposing sentiments and ideas, they combine contradictory conceptions with the words pertaining to Divine worship and things sacred, can they be expected to sympathize with the national feelings of others in a remote age? Hence the sad and mystical tone of commentators on the Psalms, a tone, which, if we forget the word Psalms and substitute national songs in its stead, is at once changed. If we consider the spirit of social union and friendship, that animates the national poetry and songs, when all ranks of free people come together mutually to excite and congratulate each other, in prosperity, in joy and in successful well-doing, or to condole with each other respecting national misfortunes, we shall find in most of the Psalms more beauty and interest.

Some, for example, are obviously songs of gratulation and joy, that they could now go up to Jerusalem to rejoice as a nation.

O come, let us sing unto Jehovah,\*  
 Make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.  
 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,  
 And make a joyful noise with Psalms.  
 For great is Jehovah our God,  
 A great king above all gods.  
 In his hand are the deep places of the earth,

The heights of the mountains are his also.

His is the sea, which he created,

The firm land his hands have formed.

Come let us worship and bow down,

Let us kneel before Jehovah our maker,

For he is our God, and we the people of his land,

The flock, which he feedeth like a shepherd.

To-day, if ye will hear his (the shepherd's) voice,

Harden not your hearts, as at Meribah,

At Massa in the desert.—

The application of an historical fact in the last lines, as well as the expression “to-day,” which is often sadly misinterpreted and misapplied, derive their animation from the living voice, by which a nation is summoned together, and the festival proclaimed, from which none had a right to be absent. Considered in reference to this, every word is full of opposite meaning. The same, also, may be said of the 100th and other Psalms. In others we find expressed the joy of those, who at such national assemblies went up in procession to the temple, and here and there a reference to their journey thither.\*

How beautiful are thy tents, Jehovah Sabaoth,

My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of Jehovah.

My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

As the bird, that hath found her house,

The swallow her nest, where she left her young,

So look I upon thy altar, Jehovah Sabaoth,

My king and my God.

Blessed are they, that abide in thy house,

They sing continually thy praise,

Blessed is he that fixeth his heart upon thee,

And goeth joyfully to thee in thy ways.†

They go through the thirsty valley of Baca.

\* Ps. lxxxiv.

† Obviously the publick roads to Jerusalem, which at that time would be full of travellers. “The trodden ways are in their hearts, means, according to a well known idiom, they delight in them, go in them gladly.

And find it abounding in water.\*  
 Blessed also is he, that guideth them.†  
 They go with ever increasing strength,‡  
 Till they behold in Zion the God of Gods.

Jehovah, God of Sabaoth!

Hear my prayer!

Give ear, O God of Jacob!

Behold, O God our shield,

And look upon the face of thine anointed.

A day in thy courts

Is better than a thousand.

I would rather stand at the threshold of my God,

Than dwell in the tents of the prodigal.¶

For Jehovah God is our sun and shield,

Jehovah assures to us grace and glory,

No good will he withhold from the upright.

Blessed, O Jehovah Sabaoth!

Is the man, that trusteth in thee.§

The first sadly misinterpreted part of this Psalm cannot be better illustrated (*absit invidia dicto*!) than by the example of those, who make pilgrimages to Mecca. As with them the inward emotion and interest increase, the nearer, in passing through the desert, they approach to the sacred spot, as they fall into an ecstasy, when they behold the glittering towers of

\* I adopt the reading, here which means to drink, and thus from the antithesis between this and *Baca* the sense becomes more beautiful and natural. They forget their thirst, and are animated by their approach to Jerusalem, for they see the sanctuary, the end of their journey. That they are still journeying, appears from the 8th verse which follows.

† This is plainly the Caravanbaschi or Ghafir, as the Pilgrims to Mecca denominate him.

‡ Though weary and fainting in the dry valleys about Jerusalem.

¶ The word here has an extensive sense including that of enemy, villain, oppressor, robber, and prodigal.

§ That is, who is faithful and true, as our law books say. This word embraces in the Psalms the duties of a subject towards God, as the previous verses celebrate the benefits conferred by God as a protector.

the Caaba, so here the march<sup>†</sup> to Jerusalem through the parched valleys is pursued with longing desire, and still increasing vigour and delight. These burning vales become to them, as it were, living fountains of water, for in Baca they already see the countenance of Jehovah.—The second part of the Psalm, also, is word for word, from the actual circumstances of the national worship at Jerusalem. There are here no far-fetched and mystical images. As here, in the time of David, prayer is offered for the king, so in other Psalms prosperity for the whole land is intreated, especially in the language adapted to the national assemblies.

I am glad, when they say to me,\*  
 Let us go into the house of Jehovah.  
 My feet stand within thy gates,  
 O Jerusalem !  
 Jerusalem is built a compact city,  
 House joins to house within it.†  
 Thither the tribes go up, the tribes of Jehovah,  
 To the memorial feast for Israel,  
 To praise the majesty of Jehovah.  
 There stand the thrones of judgment,  
 The thrones, which the king hath established.  
 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem,  
 They shall prosper that love thee.  
 Peace be within thy walls,  
 And tranquility within thy palaces.  
 For my brethren and companions' sakes  
 I will say, peace be within thee,  
 Because of the temple of our God,  
 I will seek thy good.

The young inhabitant of the country, who had once seen Jerusalem and would gladly see it again, could not speak of

\* Ps. cxxii.

† As a countryman in going to the city among us would say,  
 Urbem, quam dicunt Romam, Meliboea, putavi  
 Stultus ego huic nostræ similem, &c.

it with more simplicity of feeling, than this song exhibits. Other Psalms express the wish for prosperity in general, others celebrate the intercourse of families and tribes, and still others praise the dignity of the priests, and the pomp of the religious ceremoniel. In calamitous times their songs have a tone of mourning and lamentation, in prosperous times of joyousness; and these national festivals in a word have produced a portion of the Psalms, in which a true publick spirit prevails. All which commence with "the Lord is king," are of this kind; most, also, of the thanksgiving and halelujah Psalms, some of the family of Korah, some of Asaph, and the most touching Psalm of David, "As the hart panteth!" expresses a longing after the temple of God, and was obviously adapted for such a national festival. It is the main point of the Psalm, that he cannot even now participate

In the voice of song and gratulation,

In the crowd of those, who dance at the temple of God.

Moses organized these national assemblies, and is therefore, also, the father of these lyrick effusions.

Second. The God of Israel was without a sensuous representation. In the most sacred place of his tabernacle was laid the book of the law, in an ark, and the Cherubim, as the symbols of the marvellous and the sacred, stood upon it. The space between them was regarded as the dwelling place of Jehovah, and thus he is often called, "Jehovah who dwelleth between the Cherubim." God, moreover, had no throne in the temple. The book of the law was his throne. He was its guardian and executor, and shielded it with the force of his authority.—The purpose aimed at, was of the noblest kind, and was nothing less, than to make the national system of worship one with the political constitution, and consecrate the law itself, as a league, a compact, a treaty of God with the nation. According to the spirit of the system, again, idolatrous images and sensuous representations of God could no more ex-

ist among the creations of their poets, than they could be suffered in the temple and sanctioned by the law. But poetry was on this account the more free to celebrate the praises of God, as the God of the nation ; and the giver of its laws ; and this it has in fact done. Many of the national songs celebrate the king, who dwelleth in darkness (so it was in the most holy place) but who hath established his throne in righteousness and judgment. They exhort all the magistrates of the land to administer justice in the name of God ; for only through the medium of his laws is God present, and efficiently working among his people.\*

Jehovah reigns ! the nations tremble before him !  
 He is throned upon the Cherubim, the world is moved !  
 The great Jehovah is in Zion,  
 The lofty one above all the nations.

The king hath strength, who loveth judgment,  
 Thou hast established ordinances,  
 And maintained law and equity in Jacob.  
 Exalt Jehovah our God,  
 And bow down at his footstool,  
 Before his sanctuary.

Moses and Aaron among his priests,  
 And Samuel among them, that invoke his name.†  
 They called upon Jehovah,  
 And he answered them ;  
 He spake to them from the clouds,  
 And they observed his words,  
 The laws and ordinances, which he gave.‡  
 Jehovah our God, thou heardest them,

\* Ps. xcix.

† Who was not a priest. The distinction is here made, obviously, as it was presented to the senses in the service of the temple ; priests and laymen, servants and worshippers.

‡ This language relates to the pure national laws, and the institutions of the land ; to utter feelings of triumph respecting these is the spirit and scope of the ode.



**Thou didst favour them, and vindicate their work.\***

**Exalt ye Jehovah, our God,**

**Cast yourselves down before the holy mount,**

**Where our God, the lofty one, is enthroned.**

How spiritless is all this, when severed from its original connexions and relations ! But how apposite, when these praises are considered as the jubilant expressions of a free people, to be ruled only by the fixed and determinate laws of God.

God stands in the congregation of his people,†

He judgeth among the gods of the earth.

How long will ye judge unjustly ?

And respect the person of the oppressor ?

Do justice to the poor and the orphan,

Give their right to the oppressed and needy,

Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked .

They know not, neither do they understand,

They go on in their blindness.

Therefore the foundations of our land tremble.

I have said, ye are Gods,

All of you sons of the highest,

But like feeble men must ye die,

And together as one go down to the ground.‡

Lift up thyself, O God, and judge the land,

For all the tribes are thine inheritance.

Thus did poetry with patriotic spirit dare to reprove tyrants,

\* Thou didst stand by them, guard their institutions, aid them against their enemies, &c.

† Ps. lxxxii. God sat in judgment in the middle of the land, in the most holy place, where in doubtful cases the highest judge consulted him. He sat also in all the tribunals of the country, which were held only in his name. God alone was king and judge; and, even when there were kings in Israel, they could and must be regarded only as viceregerents of God, subject to the constitution of the country as their law.

‡ The 7th verse is placed in antithesis with the 6th in both its members. If they are so placed in contrast, Gods and men, all and one, the obscurity disappears.

and present in the midst of them that king, in whose name alone they were the judges and princes of his people. The poet had only to recal to their minds the positive constitution of their country, and the 94th Psalm exhibits the same subject with still greater ardour. All those pieces, which celebrate God as king, (political songs celebrating the fundamental principles of the government), are so confident in regard to this, that they call on sea and land, nations and people, to confess, that the God of whom they sing, is alone an upright and just king; that Judah alone has a form of government eternal like God, strong and impregnable like nature, for both are the work of one and the same God. It is the method of many Psalms to place side by side, the wonders of God in nature, and his ordinances among them, which they regard as alike marvellous. Very probably, the choirs alternated with each other in these enumerations, and, by combining together as one, the great and the small, they give to the movement of the whole dignity and stateliness.

1. 2. Praise ye Jehovah, \*

1. For it is good to sing praises to our God,
2. For pleasant and comely is the song of praise.
1. Jehovah buildeth up Jerusalem,†  
And assembleth the outcasts of Israel.  
He healeth the broken in heart,  
And bindeth up their wounds.
2. He reckoneth the number of the Stars,  
And calleth them by their names.  
Great is our Lord, and of great power,  
His understanding is infinite.
1. Jehovah raiseth up the oppressed,
2. And boweth the oppressor to the dust.
1. Sing to Jehovah in alternate choirs,

\*Ps. cxlvii.

† I do not mean to decide by the division of this psalm, that the two numbers of the parallelism were sung by two different choirs. By the numbers I have only indicated the general economy of the piece.

**2. Play to him upon the harp.**

**1. He covereth the heaven with clouds,  
He prepareth rain for the earth,  
He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains,  
He giveth to the beasts their food,  
To the young ravens, when they cry.**

**2. His delight is not in the strength of the horse,  
Nor his glory in him that runneth swiftly.  
Jehovah loveth them that fear him,  
And that trust in his goodness.**

**1. 2. Praise Jehovah, O Jerusalem !  
Praise thy God, O Zion !  
For he strengtheneth the bars of thy gates,  
He blesseth thy children within thee.  
He giveth thee peace in thy borders,  
And filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.**

**1. He giveth his commandment to the earth,  
His word runneth very swiftly.  
He giveth snow like wool,  
He scattereth hoar-frost like ashes,  
He casteth down ice in masses,  
Who can stand before his cold ?**

**2. He uttereth his word, and they are melted,  
He causeth the wind to blow, and the waters flow.**

**1. 2. He sheweth his word unto Jacob,  
His statutes and judgments unto Israel.  
He hath done so to no other nation,  
And they know not his ordinances.  
Praise ye Jehovah.**

Far as I am from introducing the artifices of dramatic representation into the psalms, it yet appears to me, that the alternation of parts is here pretty evident, though they may be otherwise divided. The bold combination of the wonders of nature with those of the state institutions is the soul of the whole.

Third. Jehovah, who reigned only by means of laws, had servants, who in every good regulation were to be the soul of his kingdom; interpreters and guardians of the constitution, and even its supreme executive; for they were the highest tri-

bunal in the land. They were moreover the regulators of the calendar, had charge of weights and measures in trade, were Judges respecting contagious diseases, and physicians. They executed contracts of property, arranged the festivals, according to which every thing else was regulated, summoned the people to the national assemblies, and marched with the sanctuary of the nation in war, to inspire the army with courage by their songs, trumpets and the presence of their God. The first servant of God, the high priest, was the first servant of righteousness.

His breast plate was called the breast plate of judgment, as among the Egyptians the presiding priest and judge carried before him the symbol of justice. The high priest however bore no symbol; but the names of the twelve tribes of his brethren, engraven upon precious stones, must rest upon his heart, and with them light and right,\* that is, the most perfect

\*That Urim and Thummim signifies the fullest, truest light, does not admit of a doubt, and as little can it be doubted, that the expression "Thou shall make (set, give) the breastplate of judgment for a Urim and Thummim" means in the Hebrew, "Thou shall make it the mark and insignia of the highest and truest judicial decision, in which no evasion, no doubt, can any longer avail." I do not attempt to decide how the oracle of God in the sanctuary answered the high priest, whether as it did Moses, by an audible voice, or by an inward guiding of his thoughts, such that when he entered with his question into this sacred place, he felt himself seized by a Divine influence, and inspired with Divine truth. It is enough that the high priest answered in the name of God; and to enquire of God by Urim and Thummim, means simply to enquire of the person, who bore the Urim and Thummim, and who, as the bearer of this, was qualified to answer, that is, legitimo modo, through the presiding judge. See Num. xxvii. 21. His answer too was confided in as an oracular decision, and we find at a later period the expression, even respecting human counsels, "when one enquired of him, it was as if he enquired of God." In short the Urim and Thummim was wisdom and truth, as of a Divine oracle, the clearest and most infallible decision. This Moses was to make the breast plate of judgment, that is, ordain this splendid attire, consecrate it, and adapt its form to this purpose. The case was the same with this, as with the attire of the

light, and the most unreserved expression of it, abide in his breast.

In the poetry of the Hebrews, the figurative images used to express the highest dignity were drawn from the attire of the priest, and especially of the high priest, because he was the first of the nation in rank, and of princely dignity by his consecration to God. Hence the costly magnificence of the age and country stood connected with him. The priests were clothed with righteousness and salvation,\* that is, as they were judges and sacred persons, guardians and administrators of the institutions of the country, on which the happiness of the nation depended, so their official attire was a symbol of both justice, the general order of society, and of the well being of the nation and Jehovah's delight in it. From this idea originated the figurative expressions in Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms, which to us appear so strange, and to scoffers were ridiculous, because we neither possess nor feel any sympathy with such sacred symbols, as were there an object of the highest reverence to a whole people. Our priests are clothed rather with contempt, and their attire is the sackcloth of poverty. The term "established religion" is in many countries so much a term of reproach and contempt, that when, in con-

head of the high priest, and the inscription upon his forehead "holiness to the Lord." This indicated his regal dignity, as standing in the place of God, that his office and duty, as the presiding judge, to bear the whole people upon his heart, to bring them in remembrance before God, and to be, as it were, a mediator between God and his people. This he was by virtue of his office, by enquiring of God in doubtful cases, and by deciding according to the voice of God in his name. So long as Moses lived, he enquired of Jehovah. When he was no more, who should enquire of him but the highest judge. He did so by right of office, and therefore dared never appear before Jehovah without his breast plate of judgment. More than this the Urim and Thummim certainly was not; nor could it be two dice, since answers were given more difficult and circumstantial, than it was possible for dice to give.

nexion with entirely different establishments and times, we read the word "priests," even the noblest imagery becomes debased and belittled. There the ruin of the country could not be more affectingly and vividly represented to the people, than by saying, "The sanctuary is profaned, the crown of the Divine majesty is fallen from the head of the high priest, the priests go in sackcloth and mourn." Their defilement was the defilement of the nation; their adorning the emblem of general order and happiness.

I exceedingly rejoice in Jehovah,  
 My heart is joyful in my God,  
 He clothes me in garments of salvation,  
 He covereth me with a princely robe.  
 As a bridegroom I stand in priestly attire,  
 As a bride in her bridal adorning;  
 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud,  
 And as the garden causeth its seed to grow,  
 So Jehovah causeth righteousness to spring up,  
 And glory before all the nations.\*

Such among this people were the images of the sanctuary. Unity among brethren and in families could not be more beautifully set forth, than by the odour of the precious ointment, that was poured upon the head of the high priest.† As the most precious odour offered to Jehovah diffused around an

\*Simon, the son of Onias, the high priest,  
 How was he honoured before the whole people!  
 When he came forth out of the Sanctuary,  
 As the Morning star coming out of a cloud,  
 As the full moon, as the clear sun  
 Shineth upon the temple of the Most High.  
 As the rainbow painted the bright cloud,  
 As the rose in the spring of the year,  
 As lilies by the rivers of water.

See the whole passage Ecclesiasticus. chap. 50.

†Ps. cxxxiii.

agreeable sensation, which nothing else gave, so unity among brethren spread a delight and fragrancy, in the highest sense pleasing both to God and man. Princes and priests were from the earliest times associated under the conceptions that both stood in the place of God, and in this language, according to the origin of the word, they were, as servants who might approach the Divinity, synonymous. In the family government of the primitive world the father was the prince and priest of his family; Melchisedeck, king of righteousness, and priest of the most high God. The Psalm, which depicts the regal dignity in the highest colours, which places the king by the side of Jehovah, and enthrones him at his right hand, exalts him to this dignity only by associating him with the conception of the priesthood.\*

Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent,  
Thou art a priest forever.  
I make thee in rank a Melchisedeck.

In the later periods of Hebrew poetry priests and angels were associated.† Since the priests were messengers of Jehovah, that is, administrators of his laws, since they had the privilege of approaching to the throne of God, and serving him in his temple, as soon as the heavens came to be represented as the tent and temple of God, the representation of priests serving him there also was a natural consequence. Even in Isaiah the Seraphim are princes and priests, that is servants of a king enthroned in his temple.‡ In the vision of Ezechiel the angel, who marks the innocent that they may be spared, is a priest; || as also the sublime form in Daniel, who interprets the vision.§ At this period all the images of purity, of dignity, and magnificence from those ancient times were spiritualized, and referred to these heavenly powers; and in this form also appear the angels of the New Testament.

\*Ps. cx. † Mal. ii 7. iii. 1. ‡ Isa. vi. 2. || Ezech. ix. 3. § Dan. x. 5.

**In the Revelation of John angels and heavenly priests, are one and the same. In this and in the Epistle to the Hebrews Christ, when his highest regal dignity is to be exhibited, is represented as a high priest.**

**Fourth.** Before the princes of the East no one could venture to appear without presents; this custom Moses availed himself of to introduce into his system the use of the ancient patriarchal offerings, and to allure the senses and affections of the people more entirely from Egyptian customs, and to attain also other ends, that will be mentioned hereafter. Among the Egyptians living beasts were offered only to the infernal God, Typhon, and for this purpose those were selected, which were noxious, hateful, and of evil omen; while to the good spirits were offered inanimate, and for the most part odoriferous gifts. As Moses, the most zealous enemy of slavery, made inalienable freedom the fundamental law of his nation, so he consecrated the whole nation, especially the firstborn, who had been spared in the last Egyptian plague, as the property of Jehovah. Here God remitted his right; he gave to the father his son, and received instead of him a beast for an offering; but of necessity a clean beast, because nothing unclean could approach a holy God, much less be presented to him as an offering. So also with the fruits of the land, which belonged to God, and of which he reserved to himself the first fruits, as a thankoffering, and an acknowledgment of the tenure, by which the land was held. The first fruits and the whole offerings were the first proper sacrifices of duty and of righteousness, as expressed in the language of the Psalm.

Do good according to thy good pleasure unto Zion,  
Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.  
Then shall sacrifices of duty please thee,  
The offerings, which go up with incense,  
The young bullocks upon thine altar.

**The sin and trespass offerings had a purpose equally good;**



they brought out secret sins, which the law could not punish, and even sins of omission, before Jehovah, that is, before his judges, and were thus better than auricular confessions, police officers, and cruel secret tribunals. Here they came with frankness before God, with the sin offering in their hands, took upon themselves the punishment, which the law prescribed, and dared not wait for it from the arbitrement of the priest. Even the inconvenience of this offering, which could be made only before the sanctuary, made some degree of foresight necessary. But the best application, which poetry made of these offerings, was of a spiritual kind.

Have compassion on me according to thy mercy,\*  
 In thy great mercy blot out my transgressions.  
 For lo ! I am a sinful man,  
 And sinful the mother, which bore me.  
 But thou lovest inward truth alone ; †  
 And shewest me the hidden sense of thy law.  
 As a priest must thou cleanse me, ‡  
 And then shall I be clean.  
 If thou wash me, I shall be white like snow.  
 Look not upon my misdoings,  
 Blot out all my transgressions,  
 Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
 Renew a right spirit within me.  
 So will I teach transgressors thy way,  
 And sinners shall turn unto thee.  
 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God ;  
 So will I sing aloud of thy righteousness.  
 Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it ;  
 Thou delightest not in burnt-offerings. ||  
 The sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit,

\*Ps. li.

† "The outward offering is not thy aim. It has a spiritual meaning, which the people know not, and which thou has taught me."

‡ This is the hidden import of sacrifices according to David's understanding. God must purify men, and the purification of the priest could be only an emblem of this.

|| For murder and adultery no expiatory offering could be made.

An humble and broken heart,  
Thou dost not despise.

And in another prayer, where he renders thanks for benefits.

Many things, O Jehovah, hast thou done for us,\*  
And thy wonderful thoughts are without number.  
Yet will I declare, and speak of them,  
Though they cannot be numbered.

Sacrifice, and offering thou didst not desire,  
Thou saidst to me secretly in mine ear,†  
Burnt-offering and sin-offering thou wouldst not.

Then Said I, lo ! I come freely,‡  
Yea it is written for me in the law,  
I delight to do thy will, O my God !  
What thou requirest is within my heart.

I will proclaim what is thy will,  
Before all the people,  
I will not refrain my lips,  
O Jehovah, thou knowest.

A publick confession, publick songs of contrition and thanksgiving, David here puts in the place of sacrifices, and maintains, that in so doing, he fulfils the inward and true sense of the law. The Prophets are filled with corresponding expressions. We have no sacrificial songs in the Scriptures, such as the pagans used ; those which treat of sacrifices are all moral and spiritual. So, also, was it with the most ancient, and

\* Ps. xl. 5—10.

† The expression, " thou openest mine ear," means obviously only what is clearly expressed afterwards. Thou lettest me silently apprehend thy will, thy proper aim, in all sacrifices. Thou sayest in mine ear, what the common people do not know, the sense of thy written law, and of the duties there prescribed.

‡ That is, " as a servant I am gladly obedient to the secret voice. " If this be the inward and proper sense of the law, it abides also in my own breast. It is that, which my own heart longs after, and gladly performs as duty. Compare Deut. xxx. 11. 12.

most pleasing, unbloody thank-offerings, and offerings of incense. We have one song respecting them, of which the most enlightened age need not be ashamed. It is

THE FIFTIETH PSALM.—ASAPH'S.

The God of Gods, Jehovah, spake,  
And called upon the earth,  
From the rising of the sun to its going down.

From Zion, the glory of the land, God shone forth\*  
Our God cometh, and shall not be silent,  
Devouring fire goeth forth before him,  
And a mighty tempest is round about him.  
He calleth the heavens above, and the earth,†  
To give judgment upon his people.  
“Gather my saints together unto me,  
Who have covenanted with me by sacrifice.”  
And all the heavens proclaimed him judge,  
Jehovah, as a righteous judge.

Hear, O my people, and I will speak,  
I will testify against thee, even I, thy God.  
I reprove thee not for thy burnt offerings,‡  
For the incense, that ever ascends to me.  
I desire no bullocks from thy house,  
Nor he goats out of thy folds,  
For every beast of the forest is mine,  
The beasts upon a thousand hills.  
I know all the fowls of the mountains,  
And the wild beast of the field is mine.  
If I were hungry, I need not tell thee,  
For mine is the world and its fulness.

\* As always from mountains; now however, no longer from Sinai and Seir, but from Zion, the glorious crown, the chief ornament of the whole land, because God dwelt upon it.

† Before heaven and earth Israel had bound themselves to his covenant, Deut. xxxi. 28. and these must now, therefore, be witnesses, how Israel had understood and kept it. The Allwise, however, v. 7. speaks in their name, and the judge becomes himself the witness.

‡ That is, I do not put you upon trial with regard to external offerings; of these you bring me enough.

Thinkest thou I eat the flesh of bullocks ?  
 Or drink the blood of goats ?  
 Offer unto God thanksgiving,  
 Pay thy vows to the Most High,  
 Call upon me in the day of trouble,  
 And when I deliver thee, honour thou me.  
 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me,  
 And to him, that taketh heed to his way,  
 Will I show the salvation of God.

It would carry me too far, to go through more particulars of the Mosaick code, and show, how, even in regard to individual expressions, they have modified the language of poetry in the Prophets and Psalms. Let it suffice, to gather, yet, a few of the choicest specimens, since there is not room for a harvest of particular remarks.

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1. In the political organization of Israel, every thing was originally connected with the sanctuary, and even bodily diseases, like moral delinquences, were regarded as rendering the subject of them impure. Hence, not only those were very naturally used as emblems of these, but also, the Prophets and poets spake of them in the language of the Sanctuary, that is, freely, openly, and without circumlocution. They regulated themselves, in this particular, not according to the laws of good society among us, of which they knew nothing. They spake as the law of Moses spake, as the father of his people thought. To the physician, expressions are allowed, which the refined villain, from no regard to morality, avoids ; and a physician, who passes judgment as a priest, must not direct himself by the modes of a later and different age. It is mere folly, also, to judge of this whole class of words and images among the Hebrews by the caprices of our customs, and to affect to shudder at a Psalm, which paints base crimes in the form of loathsome eruptions, or at a chapter of the Prophets,

which describes with truth and energy, the corrupt manners of the age. In this, too, however, poetry is modified in accordance with the particular age and character of the poet. At the court of Solomon was not heard the language, which Ezechiel, the son of a priest, who had earnestly devoted himself to study the law of Moses, the temple, and the ancient customs, ventured to employ in his minute expositions. Such things were called by their true names in the East, too, for the very purpose of awakening detestation and loathing, by the shame of the exposure ; for it is known, that those nations, in all these points, feel disgust more readily than we. By the Jewish law impurities were severely prohibited, which, among us are free from restraint, and an Arab would often blush at the questions of a European.

2. In the Sanctuary every small vessel, and every distinct part of the wall or tent had its name, and since all these things, as a Divine plan devised on Mount Sinai, and minutely described in the law, came down to a later age, it was a matter of course, that they should become the subjects of reflection, and poetical embellishment. Yet, it is not the less true, that the best periods of Hebrew poetry knew nothing of the fables, which were invented by the allegorizing spirit of a later age. What David sings of the hidden import of the law, is all of it really contained in Moses, and the developments of the Prophets, remain always true to the general character and frame of the institution. After the captivity, when the second temple was to be built, hidden meanings began to be devised, yet with some degree of wisdom, as is seen in Haggai and Zecharias. The spirit of mystical interpretation first spread itself from Egypt, at a still later period.

I do not mean by this to say, that the tabernacle of Moses, and his form of Divine worship, were not significant, even in their minute particulars. They were so, but only in regard to the general spirit of his law, and in the relation of individual parts to the whole. Moses was from Egypt and we know the

Egyptians were fond of hieroglyphics in their religious service, and even in their sacred edifices. Of some, he himself explains the import,\* and thereby puts us upon the track ; in following which, however, we must keep to the age of Moses, and the point of view, in which he stood ; otherwise, we are in danger of seeing every thing in a wrong and inverted position. The Prophets will furnish occasions for saying something on this point, and something will be indicated in the following poetical sketch, but this is not the place to go into the general character of the whole.

3. The peculiar purpose of Moses, in giving the law, was not sacrifices, nor the forgiveness of sins, but the prosperity of the State, the political welfare of the people of Jehovah. The most enlightened of the Prophets, especially Samuel and Isaiah, proceeded on the same plan, and there is no one of them, who did not make this a leading object in his discourses and plans. If, therefore, in far later times, particular sayings and customs were separated from their true relations, and more importance attached to them, than Moses and his followers gave them, in the relations which they held with others, if in regard to the so called penitential Psalms, and the goat, that was sent into the wilderness, systems were invented, of which David and Moses never thought, this is yet but the common and necessary result, to which the revolutions of time subject them. It is to be considered, that those later ages had a number of different books, whose different sentiments they confounded together, and whose language, moreover, they employed for clothing their own thoughts. Here, too, it was a matter of importance what kind of men made use of them, what ideas they had in their own minds, and what would particularly find favour with them ; finally, in what regard they were themselves,

\* Thus Moses speaks of the circumcision of the heart, that the priest, when he goes into the sanctuary, bears the sins of the people, &c. The latter gave occasion, perhaps, to the beautiful 53d chapter of Isaiah, as the 11th verse shows.

held by the succeeding age, and what kind of style its taste approved. This was sometimes the poetical, then the philosophical; and the best course, therefore, is to leave every thing to its own age, and its own author, and go to the original form of Moses, the ancient Israelitish Egyptian.

4. If any one institution has more especially tended to preserve the poetry and the laws of Moses, it is the Sabbath. To this are we indebted for the preservation, in the freshness of living beauty, of all these treasures of the poetic art. Not only was it owing to this, that the remembrance of the Creator of the world, (itself an idea in the highest degree productive to the human race), retained and associated with their national blessings, was celebrated in prayers and songs; not only that in somewhat more enlightened and quiet times, passages of the law, with or without reflection, were read and expounded; chronology, reading, writing, history, political order, ancient ideas, and new hopes, in short, the intelligence and cultivation of the people, were held at least, in reserve by this simple institution, and by means of it were, after they had fallen into neglect, revived in better times. With the sabbaths and festivals were associated the order of the state, and the regulation of the calender, and with these their freedom, and the year of jubilee. Can we, then, find fault with the Prophets, that they clothe in images derived from these so many golden dreams of future happiness, and express, in joyful songs, ideas of endless freedom and perpetual jubilee, with obvious reference to sabbatical institutions and forms? What man becomes thus animated without hope, and is it not the greatest, the noblest, and the most steadfast soul, that amidst the corruptions of the times, and from the ruins of former prosperity, foresees and celebrates in song the greater prosperity and happiness, that is still to be attained.

## V.

### OTHER REGULATIONS OF MOSES.

1. Of the mode, in which **Moses** preserved and honoured the paternal authority. Effects of it observed in idiomatical expressions, in the tone of history, in the maxims of morality, and the moral poetry of the Hebrews.
2. Relation of the wife to her husband and to the family. Proofs of it in passages of poetry, and of the Mosaic laws. Figurative representations respecting family discipline, marriage, fruitfulness, love, and wisdom. Moral precepts of the mother of Lemuel to her son.—Praise of a country housewife among the Hebrews.
3. Union of families in a tribe. Independent freedom of the individual tribes. Whether **Moses** took into view the existence of distinctions of rank in the capital city, the luxury and warlike glory of his nation. Form of Hebrew poetry, as derived from the rural simplicity of the people.
4. Why the Prophets were so zealous against luxury and oppression. The purpose, which they aimed to attain, marked out in the Mosaic economy, their right and authority.
5. Connexion of all the tribes through their relation to the promised land and to the Patriarchs. Confinement of the people and of the law of **Moses** to the local boundaries of the country. Local character of all the Hebrew writings, hopes and poetic inventions. Of the peculiar providence of God over Canaan. Origin of this kind of representation. Use of it in **Moses** and in the poets.
6. Second bond of connexion among the tribes from the Theocracy. General principle of the government. Dignity and beauty of it for rational beings. Proofs from the tribunals, punishments, taxes, revenues, &c. Most of the Hebrew poetry of a political character.
7. Objection against the tribe of **Levi** as being the chief support of the Theocracy. Why this tribe was placed in that condition. First plan of **Moses**. The manner, in which the lawgiver limited this tribe, the duties imposed upon it, and how far it was injurious to the general organization.
8. Of the Prophets, on whom the hopes of **Moses** were placed. Sad



fate of Moses, that he could not himself establish his laws in Canaan. Causes and consequences of this, and his own regret on account of it. End of the 90th Psalm. Hope of Moses.

9. Of the reference to God in the laws of Moses. Necessity and use of this. Whether it was merely pretended. Whether we can or ought to decide on this point. The law of God and Moses, a Jewish fable.

It will be necessary to say yet a few words respecting the customs of the nation, of whose poetry we are treating, respecting the cultivation, which they received through the laws of Moses, and generally respecting the political design of these laws. For we can attain a distinct knowledge of the fruit only through a knowledge of the tree, on which it grew.

1. *The relations of father and child*, constituted the primitive forms of government among men, and with a race of herdsmen, such as the Hebrews were, these remained for a long period the firmest bonds of union. As the Israelites had before them as examples, in the patriarchs of their tribes, no other than a paternal government; so were these inherent rights of humanity held sacred by the law of Moses. It prescribed to children the reverence of their parents, as the condition, on which they were to enjoy the land of promise, and the same lesson is enforced by the moral poetry of the nation. Their language has no more favourite expression, by which to designate even a king, a priest, a Prophet, the director or inventor of a thing, than the word *father*. Their history had an expression of childlike simplicity in its style, because its earliest productions were from the times, when they were still a race of herdsmen, and these served as a model for those which followed. So too are their proverbs and preceptive instructions peculiarly marked by a tone of paternal kindness and unaffected sincerity, of which scarcely any other people can furnish an example, because the poetry of no other people goes back to so early a period of the human race. The first chapters of the Proverbs of Solomon, which serve as an introduction to the book, are written with a style of engaging earn-

estness, and from the lips of the teacher, alluring his son to the paths of wisdom and virtue, flows as it were milk and honey. Even the rigorous and precise laws of Moses do not abandon this tone, wherever they enforce human obligations, and the book of Deuteronomy has the dignity and impressiveness of a sage imparting the lessons of wisdom to his children. Let one collect what is said, of the relation of children to their parents of and domestic happiness, in the Proverbs, Psalms, and Prophets, and he will have a summary of the earliest and most delightful moral sentiments. The ethical poetry of the Persians is refined, that of the Arabians subtle and discriminating, that of the Hebrews simple and childlike; the delicate nourishment of the primitive age of humanity.

2. The wife according to Oriental notions was subjected to the husband. They had no thought of a sovereign and reposing elevation of this sex, and celebrated in it only chastity, industry, modest, domestic, and matronly virtues. Customs, such as the luxurious poetry of later times ascribes to them, would in that age of the world have been folly or shame. It is therefore absurd to look for the gallant poetry of fashionable conversation among a people, when the female sex, shut up in retirement, either bloomed as a flower in the garden, or bore fruit like the vine.

Blessed is he that feareth Jehovah,\*  
 And walketh in his ways,  
 Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands,  
 Happiness and prosperity are with thee,  
 Thy wife is like the fruitful vine,  
 That spreads on the sides of thy house;  
 Thy children around thy table  
 Like plantations of young olives.  
 Thou shalt see thy children's children,  
 And peace upon Israel.

That was the happiness of a rural simplicity, which poetry celebrated. The peaceful times of the future could not, it seems, be more vividly pictured to a distracted kingdom, than by the expression,†

A new thing will Jehovah create in the land,  
A woman shall compass a man.

(that is there shall be so much security round about, that even the wife can give him protection, and, according to the condition of the ancient world, in the sphere of domestick happiness encompass him as a crown.) The laws of Moses place a high estimate upon this family enjoyment. The human lawgiver excused even from warlike service every man, who had built an house, and had not yet inhabited it, who had planted a vineyard, and had not yet enjoyed its fruits, who had betrothed a wife, and had not yet brought her to his home. "Let him go," says the sage with a noble sentiment, "and remain at home, lest he die in the war, and another dedicate his house, another enjoy his vineyard, and another take home his betrothed wife."\* Happy the lawgiver who was capable of such sentiments!

The laws of Moses interest themselves, therefore, very carefully for the instruction, and the chaste conduct, of the daughters of Israel, the degrees of kindred, which might be united, and the publick purity of morals in the relations of the two sexes. No unchaste woman was tolerated in Israel. The lawgiver aimed to obviate whatever has a tendency to debase human nature, to render the familiar intercourse of near relatives dangerous, or to degrade the wife in the eyes of her husband. On all these points the laws of Moses are the most moral, and the most prudently devised, which were ever framed under such a climate. Let any one collect together the moral precepts of Solomon, and the son of Sirach, which

\*Jer. xxxi. 22. \*Deut. xx. 5—7.

treat of the virtues and attractions of women, and he will find there all that is ornamental in innocence, in gracefulness, in a quiet and sociable temper, and in industry, interwoven as in a garland of flowers. The happiness of a well, and the misery of an ill advised marriage, are painted in appropriate colours. It is not without occasion, that the bridegroom is anointed with the oil of gladness, crowned with a festal garland, and praised in songs of gratulation. The fruitfulness of the marriage relation was valued above all earthly blessings, and the numerous expressions in the Psalms\* respecting an unexpected good fortune under the figure, "that God makes the barren woman to be the mother of children," had in the sense of that nation the strongest emphasis. So it is with the song of the mother of Samuel,† who ascends by a climax of triumphal expression, from her own domestic happiness to the happiness of her country, and of the world. So also with the frequent promises, that God shall distinguish the upright more especially with this blessing.

Lo children are an heritage from Jehovah,  
 A flourishing offspring are his reward.  
 As arrows in the hand of the hero,  
 So are sons in the pride of youth.  
 Happy the man, whose quiver  
 Is stored with arrows like these.  
 They shall not be ashamed,  
 When they speak with foes before the judge.

The Platonism of love, as well as a monastic sanctity pertaining to the marriage relation, are foreign to the poetry of this people; but how delicate and refined sentiments, notwithstanding, pervade all the scenes in the garden of love in Solomons songs. The sweetest attractions bloom there like garden flowers, the most delicate fruits are tested with the innocence of a brothers and sisters love. In the Proverbs of

\*Ps. cxiii. 6. &c. †1 Sam. ii. 1.

Solomon wisdom and folly are both females. The latter could be represented under no image with more forcible admonition, than as the personification of a seducing adulteress, the former, that wisdom which instructs and enlivens, becomes to the young man a bride, a mother, the object of his love, yea, the daughter of God, beloved from eternity. The passage of perhaps the most striking force in the Proverbs of Solomon is a lesson, which a mother teaches her son. It confirms by an example what I have been saying, and it will furnish, I trust, an agreeable interruption to my course of remark, if I insert it here, together with the eulogy of women, which immediately follows it.\*

The words of King Lemuel,  
The oracle, which his mother taught him.  
Ah my son ! thou son of my heart !  
Thou son of all my vows,  
Give not thy strength to women,  
Confide not thy ways  
To the destroyers of kings.

Neither is it for kings, O Lemuel !  
Neither is it for kings to drink wine,  
Nor strong drink for those in power.  
They drink and forget the laws,  
And wrest the cause of all the poor.  
Give strong drink to him, that is hopeless,  
And wine to the bitter in soul ;  
Let him drink and forget his sorrow,  
And think of his misery no more.

Open thy mouth for the dumb,  
And undertake the cause of the orphans.  
Open thy mouth and judge righteously,  
And do justice to the suffering poor.  
A virtuous woman, who shall search out ?  
Her preciousness is far above rubies.  
The heart of her husband can trust in her,  
So that he hath abundance of spoil.

\*Prov. xxxi.

**Love and kindness will she show him,  
And do him no evil all her days.**

**She diligently seeketh cotton and wool,  
And worketh cheerfully with her hands.  
She is like the merchant's ships,  
She bringeth her food from afar.**

**She riseth up while it is yet night  
Giveth meet to her household, and work to her maidens ;  
She considereth a field, and buyeth it,  
From the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.**

**She girdeth herself with new strength,  
Still braceth her arms for renewed toil ;  
For she tasteth the fruit of her diligence,  
And even by night her lamp goeth not out.**

**She reacheth her hand to the distaff,  
Her hand holdeth the spindle.  
She openeth her hand to the poor,  
She reacheth forth her hand to the needy.**

**She feareth not for her household,  
In the snows of the winter season,  
For all her household are doubly clothed.**

**She worketh fine clothing for herself,  
Her festal garment is byssus and purple ;  
For her husband is already known in public,  
And sitteth with the elders in council.**

**She weaveth veils and selleth them,  
And furnisheth girdles to the merchant.  
Worth and honour are her apparel,  
She hails with gladness every opening day.**

**She openeth her mouth with wisdom,  
In her tongue is only the law of kindness.  
She looketh well to the ways of her household,  
And idleness eateth not her bread.**

**Her sons go forth and call her blessed,  
Her husband also, and praiseth her.  
"Many daughters of the land do virtuously,  
But thou excellest them all.  
Charms are deceitful, and beauty vain,  
But a woman, that feareth God, deserveth praise,  
Give her the reward of her diligence,  
Let her works be praised before all.**

Such was the praise of an industrious country woman in the country of the Hebrews, for the whole economy of it was rural.

3. Moses connected throughout particular families each with its own tribe, and to this he gave its own independent domain, the right of establishing its own regulations, and tribunals, and even the liberty to carry on war upon its own account. No contest need come before the supreme tribunal, that was not brought there from choice. The father was at the head of his own family, the most aged men ruled over the families of their descendants, and from these each tribe had its princes or chief rulers. The several generations were associated together by natural bonds, by the laws of property, by reverence for age and experience, and by the ties of blood. The judge could always know fully his own land, and the business pertaining to it. In the earlier life of industry it might be anticipated as a reward to become aged in the midst of the family, for gray hairs were the ornament of the aged, and the crowning glory of the tribe. I will not institute a comparison of this with what may be the fate of the aged in states managed by a system of police, but only remark, that, even in the poetry of this people, we every where discover the respect paid to the aged, to the patriarch of the family and of the tribe. Moses had not made the honour of families and distinctions of birth dependent upon a gilded despotism, and the servile dignities of a royal city; much less had he founded the glory of his whole people upon luxurious pomp or martial renown. Gainful employment and industry were to be the sinews of the state; tranquility, and the honour of the family connexion, the delightful reward of industry and wisdom. In this light the Psalms and Prophets picture the happiness of the people, "that every one should enjoy the fruits of his labour, and dwell securely under his own olive and figtree." The first precepts of wisdom among the Hebrews, therefore, are lessons from the mouth of experienced old men, the counsels of kind and

aged parents. Even their most refined philosophical remarks assume this shape, as we see in Ecclesiastes, and some later didactic poems of the Hebrews. It is for this very reason, that the Scriptures are so interesting to children, and to artless, labouring and unsophisticated people. They find in it the language of their hearts, the lessons or collected experience of their lives; every thing is connected with the practical business of their lives both in the origin and the application. In Tyre, Sidon, or Carthage, in a warlike state of Cyclops and cannibals, such poems were never sung, such simply sublime and divine thoughts never produced, as in this country of agriculturists and herdsmen, amidst mountains, which toil and industry alone could render productive. The poetess Deborah was a dweller in tents, beneath the palm trees, the Psalmist David was a shepherd, Amos was the same, and in all the Prophets the simplicity of rural nature in their language and imagery is too obvious to be mistaken. Whoever will then, may choose the poetry of refinement and luxurious pride, but that which human nature finds adapted to its most indispensable wants, which it requires for support in its greatest trials, and for its earliest development, cordial sympathy, simplicity, and dignity are found in their fullest abundance in the ancient, mature thoughts of patriarchal instruction.

4. From this we may judge, why not only Samuel proceeded so unwillingly to the choice of a king, but the Prophets, also, showed so warm a zeal against the luxury of the country, especially the capital city. Luxurious pride, as well as a king, were foreign to the legislation of Moses. The country of the Hebrews had the most eligible situation, either for enjoying or selling the fruits of their industry; but Israel could never, consistently with its leading and essential character, become a mercantile nation, carrying on trade with distant parts, or a monarchical power engaging in foreign conquests. On both points the views of the lawgiver were too humane and enlight-



ened: He preferred health to superfluity, and the happiness, which attends on industry and temperance, to worldly renown with enervation and tyranny. Those, therefore, who are fond only of these variegated and bloody pictures in the poetry of a nation, must look for them among other nations. Jeshurun was to be an industrious and upright people of a mountainous country, who after their first conquest should live at peace. And although they in fact seldom enjoyed this, because the conquest of the country was not completed from the beginning, and for the most part was governed in a manner very much at variance with the law of Moses; yet, the fundamental principles of his economy, were so apparent, that every patriot could refer to them, as to the law of the land. How excellent was the course adopted by Moses in permitting every Prophet to do this by virtue of his Prophetic character, and to appeal to the law of the land! Whether the king or the elders followed depended on themselves, the Prophet notwithstanding, spake in the name of Jehovah, that is, by the authority of the national God, and the original constitution of the country. This high vocation and name admonished him without partiality and favouritism to become the genius of the nation, the upraised voice of publick freedom and virtue, a curb for the restraint of tyranny and corruption. In all the Prophets, whose works we have, it is distinctly to be shown, that even on political occasions the law of Moses was always the ground of decision, to which they appealed, that in their counsels they remained true to the principles of their national constitution, and therefore spake, not as fanatics, but as Israelites, as citizens appointed and authorized so to do. Respecting many of their so called prophecies, this principle will give us new light, and whoever finds himself perplexed on account of the misinterpreted term "spirit of Jehovah," may, perhaps, get a clearer view of the matter by substituting a term much used at present, "publick spirit."

5. But as they were to be, notwithstanding, but one people,

how did Moses bind together, so as to effect this, twelve free and independent republics? In the first place, by means of their country, and in the next by the gentlest bond, that can bind together free and rational beings, the law of a Divine government. I could wish, that every one, who has any objection yet unremoved, against this term, which has been so much complained of, would lay them aside, till he shall have read a few pages farther.

Moses united the tribes together by means of their country. It was the land of Jehovah, the country of their common ancestors, which had been given exclusively to them from time immemorial. The right of property pertained to Jehovah, and only the usufruct was theirs. To the land strictly appertained also the law, and to the law the land of Jehovah. They could not be separated, and God would expel the nation from the country, so soon as they forsook the law, as he had driven out the Canaanites before them; and since the law, which constituted them the people of the God of their fathers, could not be observed out of the limits of Judæa, they would cease with their expulsion from it to be the people of God. By these means Moses bound the hearts of his people to the soil; he made their country indispensable to them, because out of it they, Israel, was Israel no longer. With united force they were to take possession of it, with fraternal feeling divide it among them, and thus quietly inhabit it as one united people. Above it was protected by Mount Libanus, on the right by the river Jordan, (the tribes beyond did not properly pertain to the country), South by the desert, and West by the sea. We shall see also, that, according to the plan of Jacob, the tribes were to be so placed, that they might forever have protected themselves from external force. Now, though this object was not attained, nor the will of the Patriarch followed, yet Moses did not fail of his purpose to render the country and people inseparable from each other. Hence, the confined, local spirit, which appears in all the Prophets. Hence, in the Psalms,

and in all the works pertaining to the captivity, the sighing after their own land. Even now, after two thousand years full of vain and delusive hopes, the Jews still indulge the same longing after the land of their fathers, for there only can God reign, there only his law be observed, and there only shall those, who sleep beneath the earth, awake again to life.—What all ancient lawgivers sought to accomplish, to bind their people by strong feeling to the land of their fathers, Moses has attained in the most effectual manner, by giving locality to his law, and by the national God of his fathers. He planted a wild vine on the mountains of Jehovah, and encompassed his people with the arms of the most *special and local Providence*.

Since so much is said in the way of objection against this last phrase, and all those Psalms, which are formed upon the same conception, are the object of such peculiar criticism, I may be permitted to say a word more particularly respecting it.

The first sensuous impression, which Moses gave his people respecting the providence of God over their country, was obviously such as this.\*

It is a land unlike to Egypt,  
Whose waters flow from rivers :  
A land of hills and valleys,  
That drinketh rain from heaven.  
Thy God doth visit it continually,  
Jehovah's eyes behold it  
From the beginning of the year,  
Until the end thereof.

And whoever is acquainted with the make and condition of Judæa, as compared with Egypt, may see the exact truth of this description. The fertility of the soil depended on the favourableness of the weather, and was therefore immediately, as it were, under the careful eye of the God of heaven, and

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indebted to a constant Providence. The early and the latter rains, 'he wind from this or that quarter of the heavens determined the success or failure of every thing, and so it was very natural, that Moses should take, as he did, heaven and earth to be witnesses of their covenant, and call upon them to avenge its every violation. The heaven was to become iron and the earth brass, the early and latter rains to fail, and the East wind to sweep them away, &c. if they did not obey the law of God, who looked down upon them from these heavens, and who gave them this land for a possession. Every one perceives how impressive, how adapted to time and place, were these voices from Gerizim and Ebal. They embrace the whole character and mode of thinking of the nation thus delivered, and transplanted hither, and all the peculiar qualities of the country. Every thing must remind them of their law, every season of the year, every fertile spot and watered glen, but still more their religious worship, with its festivals and ceremonies. And on this circumstance was formed the genuine national spirit of the Psalms and Prophets. Yet it was no weak superstition or fanatical faith, which he required of them, but a faith in the special care and providence of God, such as we ought all to cherish, only with a local application to the law and land of their fathers.

6. But the theocracy, which has been so often scoffed at? So far from deeming it to be in need of an apology, I could rather wish, that, in a form adapted to our degree of cultivation, we might all enjoy the same thing, for it is precisely that, which all men wish for, and for which all wise men have laboured, but which Moses alone and at so early a period had a heart to carry into effect, namely:—*that the law should govern and not a lawgiver, that a free people should adopt it of their own free will, and voluntarily observe it, that an invisible, rational, beneficent power should control us, and not fetters and chains.* Such was the idea of Moses, and I know of none more pure and sublime. But alas! for that and all the insti-

tutions founded on it, he came three or four thousand years too early, and perhaps, at the end of six thousand, another Moses would find, that the time had not yet come.

All government is matter, not of choice, but of necessity, that, which is too corporeal and visible, becomes a yoke of oppression, nay, often a disgrace to human nature. The lighter and more invisible are the bonds, which unite a community together, the more the governing principle must work upon their minds, and that in secret and without witnesses, as a motive of inward actions can work upon them, finally, the more all arbitrary power, caprice, and the exclusive domination of one or a few men, which always is felt as severe, is excluded, and all power is vested in a national law, above the reach of arbitrary will, and as it were, established upon an invisible throne; by so much is a constitution of government the more noble, and worthy of man, as a free and rational being. And what is the principle, and the form of government, thus described, but the theocracy of Moses. The law reigned, inwardly indued with the authority of the Divine word, and outwardly authorized by the united voice of the people. It was enthroned in the national temple. This was a tabernacle or tent of the God of the country, which belonged to all the twelve tribes, and was to unite them together, as one family and worshippers of one God. Hence, the golden calves at Dan and Bethel, which severed the national bond of union, were objects of peculiar hatred to the Prophet. Thus it was to Jehovah, and not to a man of arbitrary dominion, that they were bound by obligations of duty and good faith. Before him they stood, with their thoughts and deeds exposed to his view, yet, not as slaves, but as children, as a chosen inheritance; and the blessings, which he bestowed upon the people, were ever recalled to their remembrance, as rational men, and rehearsed anew in songs and the lessons of the Prophets.—What more refined method is there to combat the wants of the country, than to commit them to the sanctuary of the nation, instead of

the courtly sensualities of a throne, to place men with their delinquencies before Jehovah, instead of a man, perhaps, no less criminal than they. Who has not felt how much oppression is involved in giving to men power over the life of men? in committing the right of condemnation and of pardon to the caprice of an individual? in having courts of justice composed and held, not in the presence of God and the nation, not by judges chosen of the people, but by the hired servants of princes, in fortified places, in a labyrinth of judicial halls, technical formularies, &c. Moses had higher and purer conceptions of the matter. His tribunals of justice were held in publick. The law of the national God dictated the punishment, and no judge could give a dispensation. The bench of justice was God's, and belonged not to a created man. His laws, and the admonitions of the Prophets respecting them, sound like the uttered voice of Divine justice, and the very spirit of rectitude. Joy, pride, and glory in the name of Jehovah, were to be the impelling principles of all publick action. This joy and this glory were called religion, and the economy, which laid the foundation for it, which rendered the law of Jehovah a perpetual invisible code, we denominate a theocracy. With the enthusiasm, which animated it, the songs and Prophetic oracles of the Hebrews, are filled. The greater part of their poetry, which is so generally held to be spiritual, is political.

7. "All this might perhaps be so," it will be said, "were it not, that Levi, as we find, was to be the guardian of the law, consequently the protector of the publick liberty. The superstitious, lazy domination of priests, who had the precedence of the other tribes, consumed their choicest revenues, and yet in times of distress could not help them, has confounded all these fine ideas."

There is, it must be admitted, some truth in this objection, and truth, which no one has seen more clearly, than Moses himself did. *His first plan was, that the first-born of every*

*family and tribe should be holy to the Lord ;\** consequently, also, serve at the altar of the national God ; and what a crown of honour to the nation, and how honourable to families would such an arrangement have been, in which all the heads of their several families should be judges, princes of the people, and servants in the palace of Jehovah. By this method the tribes would have been most intimately united and no jealousy could have separated them from each other.

But when the Israelites danced round a golden calf, when Moses saw, that he must not commit himself to the people at large, in their rude state, that they were far from being sufficiently advanced to be prepared by him single handed, for the prosecution and attainment of national ends in the name of Jehovah, what remained for the lawgiver, but to select a single tribe, and through that accomplish his purposes with the rest ? This idea approached more nearly to the Egyptian economy, and was at least easier of execution, but it necessarily threw the apple of discord and jealousy among the tribes, all of whom would consider themselves as placed in rank below the chosen tribe. In the choice of this tribe, Moses naturally selected the one,† which was most nearly allied and most faithful to him, which on the occasion of the golden calf, that is, of the rebellion against Jehovah, had proved true, and which, moreover, had Aaron at its head. The brother of Moses, second in honour only to Moses in the deliverance of Israel, was also a prince of the Most High, the decorated image, though only an image, of a king and Supreme Judge. Moses saved the freedom of his nation as he could. The tribe of Levi had no inheritance, no executive, still less a legislative, and least of all, a despotic power. The execution of every political enterprize depended on the elders of the tribes of the whole people. Levi was only the learned, not the ruling tribe, and since on it depended the interpretation of the law,

\* Ex. xiii. 2. xix. 6. xx. 24.

† Ex. xxxii. 29.

the sanctuary, jurisprudence, medical knowledge, and whatever else of science pertained to that age, these things at least were not burthensome to the people by any wide distinction, which they implied. The priests were in every thing only counsellors, mere servants. Even in the highest consultation by Urim and Thummim, the royal shield of truth, the person of the high priest was lost sight of, for God spoke, and if the priest was a man of any degree of feeling, he could not, under the impression of awe, which the most holy place inspired, and in the name of eternal truth, speak otherwise than in accordance with truth and rectitude.

Yet is it undeniable, that the dependance placed upon the priesthood in the system of Moses was the first to fail, and Moses seems himself, when in his benedictions he comes to Levi, to feel this.\* In the conquest and division of the country we find little employment of the breastplate of the high priest. The fulfilment of the law of Moses was not pressed, as it should have been, and here was laid the foundation of all the evils, which under Eli rose to almost perfect anarchy. The people also resolved to have a king, and with the reign of the kings the genuine Mosaic economy for the most part terminated. The reign of priests after the captivity was any thing but the ancient constitution of Moses; in short, the design of the lawgiver was scarcely apprehended at all, and still less realized—such was the constant complaint of the Prophets.

8. “But Moses placed his reliance upon a Prophet, such as he was, to whom Israel should give heed as to him; why did this Prophet never come? or if he came, destroy, instead of completing the work of Moses?” How has this great man been misapprehended, and his noblest principles traduced! The work of Moses remained alas! incomplete, for the stubbornness of his people, and his own sad destiny deprived him



of the longed for crown of his labours, the privilege of himself putting his laws in operation in the land of Canaan. In a few months after they went out of Egypt, the whole plan of his laws was arranged, men were sent to explore the country, and he was already upon its borders. But the cowardly people were rebellious, and he must return and encamp for thirty eight tedious years in the cheerless desert of a peninsula in the Red Sea. Of the history of this period we have nothing but an unpretending record of encampments, though it was here, that he was able to accomplish so much, and would have accomplished every thing for the establishment of his laws. Now it was, that he sang the 90th Psalm, in which he contemplates the generations vanishing away, and his own life passing as an idle tale, and directs himself to God as alone enduring.—We have already listened to one half of this sublime ode, let us now hear the other.

Who sees that this, O God, is thine anger,  
That he may fear thee, as thy wrath is fearful ?  
Teach us, O Lord, so to number our days,  
That we may apply our hearts to wisdom.  
Turn, O Jehovah ! how long art thou angry !  
Comfort us again, we are thy people.  
Let us early rejoice in thy goodness,  
Then will we exult and be joyful,  
All the days of our lives.  
Make our lives, O Lord, joyful again,  
Which thou so long hast afflicted,  
Which so many years have seen only sorrow.  
Let thy work, O Lord, appear,  
Which thou hast reserved for thy servants,  
Show them, show their children thy favour.  
Let the smiles of Jehovah our God  
Be upon us again, establish, O Lord,  
Establish the work of our hands,  
The work of our hands, establish thou it.

But the supplications of Moses did not avail. He was not destined to survive the establishment of his work in Canaan,

and since, as an old man of 120, he saw his death near, since he knew the character of his people, and no one was perceived, who could entirely fill his plan, what remained for him in his perplexity? With what could he sustain himself, but with the hope, that God himself would raise up another man like him, who should carry forward his designs to their completion, and to whom Israel would yield obedience. Such a man could not and would not destroy the work of Moses, for it was the national constitution, in accordance with which even the Prophets must speak and act. But alas! no such man appeared in that first age, on which so much depended. Joshua was merely a hero, and Eleazor a priest. The power was divided, and the rude tribes abandoned the fundamental principles of the Mosaic economy. Whether in later times, and after the period of the captivity, there were Prophets like Moses, we shall see hereafter; enough, that whoever has a human heart, and feels what pain and what anxious longings the lost labour of a year, to say nothing of a whole life, awakens in the soul will not grudge the dying legislator so patriotic a hope, at least for his last soothing consolation. It was indeed the only reward of his laborious and painful life.

9. "But why," it is asked, "did Moses give out his code of laws for the work of God, and his tables for the hand-writing of Jehovah, and why did he implant in the minds of his people their misanthropy and religious arrogance?"

And supposing as the question implies, that he merely *gave them out* as such did he not act wisely in doing so? What other means had he of attaining his end? Let one read what he endured for forty years, what he bore amidst all the miracles, the benefits and judgments, which he performed in the name of God. How then would he have succeeded had he gone forth with the cold dim light of political philosophy to restrain and convince his 600,000 rebels.

Laws must be held sacred, and for a rude people, such as the Israelites then were, they could become sacred in their eyes only by being regarded as divine. Even now our best

laws are wanting in sacredness and impressiveness in their relation to the minds of the people. Those, who violate look upon them as arbitrary and conventional rules, which they may venture to break over, and the lawgiver himself is the first to transgress. The economy of Moses was designed not to be thus. It was to be regarded, as the ordinances of God in nature are regarded, and as such is it celebrated in the Prophets and Psalms.

Consider it then, at least as a matter of necessity, as prudence and humility in the lawgiver, that the laws of Moses appear impressed with the glories of a Divine original. For the good of his people he erected an ever enduring monument, and yet his own name was not to receive the glory of it; the presiding Genius of the nation was its author.

Such is the answer, which I would give on the supposition, that his laws were not really, but only professedly of Divine origin. But why need we make this supposition? What greater work has Providence to accomplish among men, than to form and promulgate law and order, light and truth, among the nations? And was ever so much of these divine blessings conferred by one institution, as by the pure, the wise, and moral code of Moses?

And according to the conception of all nations is there a nobler work of God in the souls of men, than the divine thoughts; impulses, aims and energies, which he sometimes imparts to one chosen man for the cultivation of thousands? Those ancient lawgivers, the earliest and greatest benefactors of the human race, have they not universally been held by their cotemporaries, or their posterity for favourites of the Deity, and holding secret intercourse with the divine being? and which of them lived at so early a period as Moses?

Who now will determine, when in the soul of such a man, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and excited and actuated by the God of his fathers, the human ends, and the more than human begins? where, in the handwriting of the

tables, his finger and the finger of God met together. In the grammatical sense, we all know what is meant by *spirit* and *finger of God*, but here there is a historical relation of what was executed and done.

Nor must we judge of such matters according to what we see in our own times. We live in the midst of scattered ruins, amid arts and implements of all kinds. Every thing for us is previously devised, has become a familiar tale, and a matter of record. Our most familiar and intimate thoughts are devised, they are not our own. But in the deep stillness, in the sacred solitariness of that lonely descent—who of us can place himself there? who would venture to judge and decide concerning the inward working of God in a soul so pure, so full of energy?

And why need we decide? Let them, who stood by the mountain, and received the law, seek to comprehend the marvellous glory, which adorned the glowing heaven; why should we attempt it? It is enough, that the contents, and the effects of the law of Moses are Divine, and Divine also the poetry, to which it has given birth. The work and the effect bear testimony to the work-master.

*Ἐρχεν ἐπ' ἔργον*

*Θεοῖσιν ἐπευξαμένος τελεσαι τούτων δε κρηίτας  
Υἰώσκει αἰθανύτων τε θεών, ὀνήτων τ' ἀνθρώπων  
συστασιν, ἡτε ἐκαήτα διερχεται ἡτε κρατεῖται.*

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## THE LAW OF GOD AND MOSES.

### A JEWISH FABLE.

Satan, the enemy of all good, learned that God had given to the earth a law, in which all the wisdom of heaven lay hidden, and which should put an end to the worship of Satan upon earth. He hastened therefore, to the earth, saying to it,

“Earth where hast thou the law, which God hath given thee?” And the Earth said, “The Lord knoweth the ways of his wisdom, I understand them not.” He went to the sea, and to the deep abyss. The sea and the abyss said, “It is not in me.” He went to the realms of death, and the dead said, “We have heard the fame thereof from afar.”

After he had traversed the world, and wandered through all the nations, that served him, he came into the Arabian desert, and saw a man with a shining countenance; it was Moses. He approached him in the garb of hypocrisy, being clothed as an angel of light, and with flattering address offered himself as his scholar. “Man of God,” said he, “who possessest the wisdom of Jehovah, and hast hidden all the understanding of the Elohim, and all the mysteries of creation in thy law.”

“Silence,” said Moses interrupting him with a look, that at the same time changed him again into his Satanic form, “silence! the law is Jehovah’s, not mine. With him is wisdom and understanding, counsel and strength; for man the fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to avoid evil is understanding for him.”

Satan abashed shrunk back, and the angels of God approached to attend upon a man thus humble in his exaltation. They taught him, and he gave instruction to them. The prince of the law was his guardian spirit, and God himself answered from the cloud. “*Keep the law of Moses my servant*; because he was humble and gave me the glory, I have given it him for his own possession.

## VI.

### BLESSINGS PRONOUNCED UPON ISRAEL.

Whether Jacob anticipated that his posterity would be under the necessity of conquering Canaan by force of arms. Why so painful a necessity existed in the time of Moses. What was meant by a war of Jehovah. Whether the claims of the Jewish nation to Canaan could or need be sustained according to our systems of international law. Poetical title of gift, as evidence of right to the country, Jacob's blessings upon his sons. What he probably effected by them, and how far his views were adopted and followed. Explanation of the passage. "he was fleeting as water" in the prophecy upon Reuben. Explanation of the blessing of Judah. A short history of what it imported. Designation of Issachar's place of residence. Where probably it was designed, that Dan should dwell. Illustration of the blessing of Joseph from local circumstances. General conception of Jacob's testament.

Blessing uttered by Moses. Difference between these and those of Jacob. Particular illustrations. Striking position of the land of Judæa. Its poetical renown.

Appendix. Tabor the mountain of the sanctuary, a wise conception of Moses.

When Jacob predicted their destiny to his sons, he scarcely conceived, that they must conquer with the edge of the sword the land, which he promised them. He had quietly traversed it, and looked upon it as his father-land, where even in death his bones longed to find rest. This he divided to his sons according to the traits of their several characters, as a land for herdsmen. Of a bloody conquest no trace of a conception is found in his benediction. He looked with horror upon the deed of Simeon and Levi in destroying a Canaanitish town and family, who yet had insulted his race. He probably sup-

posed, that his sons would soon range over the country again, and establish themselves here and there, as he had pointed out to them. But it was destined to be otherwise. Four hundred years the nation lingered in Egypt, and had no national leader. It sunk under oppression, till finally, awakened by distress, it received a deliverer, whom yet it followed with difficulty. What hindrances did he find in his way? In Canaan itself every thing was changed. Immediately on his going out from Egypt the hordes of Amalek went forth to meet and oppose him, no people would willingly yield him a passage, and with arms in his hands he must open a way for his host. That Moses did this unwillingly we see from the whole account of his march. He chose not the shortest and most direct routes to Canaan, because he must have forced his passage through a nation of Egyptian origin, and he was chiefly careful for the safe return of his unwarlike host. Through some kindred nation as the Edomites he supposed that he might pass, and gave assurances against the slightest injury. All was to no purpose, and so his people must first range for thirty years in the desert, the aged die, and the young be formed into a warlike race in the best manner, that circumstances permitted. For one thing was certain, that among the inhabitants of Canaan the Israelites could not live in conformity with the laws of Moses. These nations were warlike hordes, and Israel was to be a peaceful, agricultural people. A part of the inhabitants of the country were troglodytes, dwellers in caves, and we know how debased and hateful these were in the eyes of Nomade tribes.

The sons of base men, nameless children,  
Who should be driven from the land;

says Job,\* and Moses.† They must be expelled from the country on account of their savage mode of life, the promis-

\* Job. xxx. 1—8. † Lev. xviii 24—30. Num. xviii. 23, 29. 34.  
Deut. ii. 10—12. ix. 2. Wisdom of Sol. xii. 3—6.

cuous intercourse of the sexes, and other vices among them. The Hamitish superstition however was the blackest of all, for human sacrifices existed among them, and how could this consist with the Mosaic economy and political constitution? Only one means too remained of attaining the end, the sad but common right of war, as it existed in those times. They must leave the country or be destroyed! That Moses felt the severity of this measure, as deeply as we feel it, we see from the mild laws of war, which he prescribed to the Israelites for after times.\* He commanded even to spare the trees in a country made the seat of war. This too was now a war of sad necessity, or as it was called *a war of Jehovah*, that is, an expedition, to which they were constrained by a regard to the land of their fathers, their religion, the graves and primeval claims of their ancestors. What holy war of modern times would bear a comparison with it? And yet how fearfully has this expedition in the name of Jehovah, i. e. for ancient possessions and ancestral rights been abused! Israel fought *pro aris et focis patrum*, for from this country they came, and there lay the bones of their fathers. There was many a grove, and altar, sacred to the God of their fathers; every thing, which among ancient nations was denominated the family sanctuary, was to be sought there. The nation moreover could not remain in the desert. In the short space of 40 years 600,000 had died, and they were not formed to live like the predatory hordes of the Ishmaelites. A race of shepherds must have a place of rest, and where should they go, if not to their own fatherland. This is the hereditary right of all dwellers in tents among the Orientals. They feed their flocks, where their fathers fed them, and their flocks themselves know the way to their places of resort. It is strange, that we should seek to justify a people so ancient and diverse from us in their notions of life, and of the rights and relations of their tribes,



by our notions of property, or to judge them by our most modern international laws, of both which they were wholly ignorant. The testaments and transmitted rights of their ancestors were not recorded in written formularies, but preserved in traditions, in songs, in benedictions, and for these they contended as for their most sacred possessions, as for the honour of God and of their race. Instead of juridical formularies let us now examine a poetical title of gift and inheritance, which we have reserved for this connexion. It is the blessing of Jacob, who had, as it were, a map of Canaan before him, and distributed the country to his children as his property. We shall notice how he places the tribes, and represents their entering upon their inheritance, and afterwards by way of contrast treat of the blessing of Moses; as aside from that consideration this would be the place for doing so. So far as the benediction unfolds personal traits of the sons of Jacob, I have elsewhere illustrated it;\* here it is before us only as a national document, as the most ancient map of Canaan, in which we shall at the same time see, what effect the oracle of the patriarch produced on the spirit of the nation.

### JACOB'S TESTAMENTARY WILL

IN REGARD TO THE INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBES.

Gather yourselves together, that I may declare  
 What shall befall you in later times.  
 Assemble yourselves and hear, ye sons of Jacob,  
 And hearken unto Israel your father.

[Jacob does not form a distinct conception of the time, when the prophecy will have its accomplishment. He wished perhaps, that it might be soon after the death of Joseph, because he longed himself to be out of Egypt. But such a wish was at variance with the period of 400 years in that dream of Abraham, in which servitude and affliction were exhibited

\*Briefe, das studium der Theologie betreffend Th. 1.

as the destiny of his posterity. The dying swan therefore looked forward to far off times, but his last song could not but commemorate the land of Canaan, as the land of his heritage, and fix it in the hearts of his children, that thus they might always feel themselves strangers in Egypt, and have their liveliest hopes fixed upon those distant mountains. Without doubt this song, like the older traditions of their fathers, contributed much to preserve the spirit of the nation uncontaminated even in Egypt, and to cherish the feeling, that they were a race never to be united with the nation, in which for the time they were sojourning.]

Reuben, thou ! my first born son,  
 My might, the firstling of my strength !  
 Thy precedent dignity and excelling power,  
 Pass by thee, as the proud waves,\*  
 Thou hast precedence no more.  
 For thou wentest up to thy father's bed,  
 Thou hast defiled thy father's couch.

[A sad beginning, and painful both for farther and son. Reuben has dishonoured his family, and his birthright, the honours of the tribe, which pertained to the firstborn are taken from him, and given, as we shall see, to two of his brethren. Judah obtains the precedence in rank and dignity, the sceptre of command, and Joseph the two fold inheritance. The priesthood, (of which Jacob however knew nothing), afterwards fell to Levi. Reuben must receive but a common in-

\*I offer it for consideration, whether this slight verbal elucidation of this passage does not as clearly suit the context, as the common construction does violence to it? What sense in saying, he passes away with levity or with pride as water? and then how forced? Does the dying father deal in sarcasm? and that too respecting the misfortunes of his son, the recollection of which must so deeply affect him? Could the last clause of the preceding verse moreover stand alone? Obviously it belongs to the following; and then the otherwise imperfect parallelism is rendered complete.

heritance among the tribes, and the command of Jacob in this particular was followed. The patriarch assigned him no definite boundaries, and he afterwards received his inheritance without the proper limits of the holy land. How sad, and at the same time beautiful is the image presented, that the superabundant dignity and power which belonged to him, now sweeps by him like a proud wave, and his hopes are annihilated by his guilt.]

Simeon and Levi ! they are brethren,  
 Their swords were instruments of murder.  
 My soul came not into their bloody counsel,  
 My heart was not joined in their company.  
 When in anger they slew a hero,  
 And in revengo destroyed a noble ox.\*  
 Cursed be their revengeful anger,  
 Cursed be their cruel hatred,  
 I will divide them in Jacob,  
 And scatter them in Israel.

[The command of the patriarch was fulfilled, and the descendants were destined to bear the burthen of the fathers of their tribes. Simeon was in little estimation, and Moses omitted him in uttering his benedictions, probably because he could find for the tribe according to this ancient oracle no fixed boundaries. It afterwards acquired a few scattered cities in Judah, and was compelled to seek places of residence without the limits of Judæa. For Levi Moses provided also by giving the tribe 48 scattered cities. We have now done with those oracles, which are of a melancholy character. With the blessing on the princely Judah we are at the same time conducted to the land of promise.]

\*Ox and man are here synonymous. The parallelism shows this, and we know, that, even in the poetry of the Greeks, a stately ox was the image to represent a brave man. [This is not the only case in which it is nearly impossible to give the sense as literally, as I have aimed to do, and at the same time preserve any degree of poetical expression. Tr.]

Judah, thou art he,  
 Whom thy brethren (as a leader) shall praise.  
 Thy hand shall be upon the neck of thine enemies,  
 Thy father's children shall bow down before thee.  
 Judah is a young lion!  
 By spoils, my son, art thou exalted!  
 He lieth down, he croucheth as a lion,  
 As a strong lion, who will rouse him up?  
 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,  
 Nor the commander's staff from his march,\*  
 Until he comes to his place of rest,  
 And nations are obedient to him.  
 For he bindeth his foal to the vine,†

\*I venture to retain the Hebrew though some prefer the reading of the Samaritan copy. How could the patriarchal shepherd be thinking of military standards, while his sons were standing before him as shepherds, and when all the other images possess the corresponding simplicity. Judah's hand is clenched upon the neck of his enemies, he seizes his prey like a lion, he marches forth as a conqueror, and complacently and proudly satiates himself with wine and milk. Such are the images, which the picture presents, and how came warlike banners among them? Besides the parallelism requires rather the sense, which I have given. Judah is always to retain the insignia of office, and since the language here relates to a march toward Canaan or Shiloh, the place of rest, the sense becomes clear. "Judah in his march, and his pursuit of his enemies is never to lay down the staff of a commander, till peace is secured, and the nations brought in subjection." That the original word here means not only a commander, but the commander's staff of office, is plain from Num. xxi. 18. as well as from the parallelism. The word corresponds with "sceptre" as "his march" must also with "Judah." This again according to what follows can only mean the *going*, the *steps*, the *march* of Judah. That the original admits of this sense, and that indeed the name of the foot in Hebrew was derived from its motion, its step, needs no proof.

†Though afterwards used in a wider sense, these images originally expressed only the exultation of the hero in his new and fertile country. In this feeling he dismounts, and binds his ass by the rich clusters, washes his garment in wine, cleanses his mouth with milk &c. Of a moral sense it is not probable the patriarch thought. He aimed rather to excite Judah to take the lead in returning to Canaan by exhibiting them a picture of secure and triumphant peace.

His ass's colt to the choice vine.  
 In wine he washes his garment,  
 His mantel in the blood of the grape.  
 His eyes are sparkling with wine,  
 His teeth are white with milk.

[Every one feels here, that the whole picture represents only a march, or progress of a Nomade horde. Judah is preferred to the dignity and power of the firstborn, that he may march in advance of all, that his hand may be first in the neck of his enemies, that he may be a bold lion, and lay himself down in Canaan in confidence and tranquility. The course is towards Shiloh, and Jacob perhaps named that place, because it was in his own peculiar region of country, between Sichein and Bethel, and thereby he at the same time instructed Judah not to lay down the badge of a leader, till he reached the inheritance of his father. The parallelism in the mean time shows, that the patriarchal Prophet had more in view here, than the name merely, and that the term signified also a place of rest, a city of peace. For the conquerer does not bind his ass to the vine, and wash his mantle in the blood of the grape, until the nations quietly obey him. Judah in a measure, though not fully, performed the duties thus imposed. He did not impel his brethren to leave Egypt, but suffered himself to be oppressed, like the others, until a levite came and effected their deliverance. In the desert Judah (probably with the banner of a lion, in accordance with the language of Jacob here,) proceeded in advance of his brethren; but, so soon as they arrived at Shiloh, (supported also perhaps by the authority of this benediction) he secured to himself the first portion of the conquered country, though the nations inhabiting the land were not, as the same authority required, all of them yet brought in subjection. He, indeed, was now supplied with a land rich in vineyards and pasturage, but a large part of his brethren were destitute, and when afterwards it was enquired of the sacred oracle, "who shall conduct the war?" no other

answer could be expected, (according to this same blessing of Jacob,) than "Judah shall be the leader." For this was a duty pertaining to his rank, by right of which, also, he had at once appropriated the half of the land of Canaan.—After David the most renowned of their kings arose out of Judah, the images, which occur in this ancient benediction, could not fail to be applied more especially to him, and thus the lion of the tribe of Judah reposed himself in a still higher sense. Jerusalem is denominated, by a Prophet, Ariel, the lion of God, and now the conqueror dips his mantle in the blood of his enemies, as the Patriarch of old had dipped it in the guiltless blood of the grape. In process of time these figurative expressions were transferred even to the lineage of David, and finally, they were all appropriated in one of the latest Prophets, to the future king of peace and blessedness, including even the ass and the ass's colt. The whole plainly sprang from this ancient prophecy, as the original source. The tribe of Judah always maintained itself the first in rank and dignity. Even in the captivity, the leader of the people was a prince of Judah, and Zerubabel of that tribe was their guide in the return from captivity. Thus one thing is connected with another by the relations of time, and with the progress of events the sense of the prophecy was more and more amplified, as we shall soon see more at large.\*]

Zebulon shall dwell by the sea,  
At the haven for ships shall he dwell,  
And his boundary shall reach to Sidon.

\* I merely remark in addition, that in this way the literal sense of the blessing took continually a wider compass. The word "forever" which probably belonged to the second clause, was referred to the first. "Forever shall the sceptre not depart from Judah," and thus the second clause acquired an entirely new sense. A long critical history might be written on this passage. The original sense, and the natural progress of the conceptions connected with it, will be pretty clear from what I have said.

[It was probably Jacob's intention, that when Judah had taken the lead as far as Shiloh, the heritage of his father, Zebulon should fall to the West, and seek his dwelling place by the sea; and though they came to Shiloh, and divided the land under other circumstances, than were contemplated, the command was too distinct not to direct Zebulon for his residence to the bay of Acco, which nature herself has marked with convenient harbours along its coast. He did not, however, extend his limits to Sidon, because the conquest of the upper part was not completed, though this district is mentioned in Josh. xiii. 6. as the heritage of Israel.]

Issachar is a strong beast of burden,  
That lieth down between two hills.  
He seeth that repose is pleasant,  
The land around is beautiful,  
He stoopeth his shoulder to bear,  
And serveth the vessels of water.\*

[He was to choose for himself, that is, the delightful valley between Tabor and Hermon, and there dwell in tranquility. There he would find a beautiful country, and fine views, suited to his peaceful character. There among the rivers and fountains he could distribute the water, and in his patient and industrious manner become useful to other pastoral tribes, and gain profit to himself. This is plainly the primary and simple

\* The language here by no means relates to tribute, for how would that be consistent with the image of a beast of burden, the comparison, with which is yet obviously continued in the representation of bearing upon the shoulder. The word in the original meant, undoubtedly, a bottle or leather bag, and the notion of tribute came to be denoted from their bringing tribute in bags or sacks. Issachar came to dwell by the Kadumim, small streams and torrents, which were swollen in time of rain, and here according to his patient nature he was to divide the water to his brethren, the roving herdsmen, and obtain from it his own advantage. That in this region there were assemblages of herdsmen for the distribution of water, we see from the song of Deborah. Jud v. 11,

sense of the passage, and we shall see, in the benedictions of Moses, how he wished to apply and use the labour of this tribe for the place of his sanctuary. His word was not accomplished ; but the passage in the blessing of Jacob was too plain, for Issachar to fail of obtaining his portion between Tabor and Hermon, where every thing, which Jacob said of the beauty of the country, was found true. It abounds in delightful views, and fertile pastures, and the character of Issachar proved to accord with the language of the Patriarch. The tribe produced few heroes, though its long and beautiful valley was often the theatre of war. But this tribe was strong in the number of its population, and even in Egypt had increased to a great extent.\*]

Dan also shall be the leader of his tribe,  
 As one of the tribes of Israel,  
 A serpent shall Dan be in the way,  
 A horned serpent in the path,  
 That biteth the heel of the horse,  
 So that his rider falleth backward.

[By the first words here Jacob admits Dan, who was the first among the sons of his concubines, among his other sons to receive an inheritance with them. This, therefore, could not be altered, when they took possession of that country, but since he was the seventh in order, he was set far back and received his portion among the last and least regarded. According to the intention of Jacob he was to have his inheritance in a region, where from narrow mountain passes he might fall upon the rear of an enemies' cavalry in their incursions, and make their riders fall backwards. A small part of the tribe of Dan accordingly sought the Northern section of the country, probably as the heritage assigned it by the language

\* There may perhaps, be a play upon words intended in the original, as the term used means both a heap and an ass, The former notion may have led to the latter,



of Jacob. All incursions into Judæa came from Syria through the valleys of Libanus. That was the way of the nations, and thither very appropriately, if we judge it by the character of its hero Sampson, the tribe resorted. To the Philistines he was truly a serpent in the way, a bold cerastes, which threw itself from behind upon the horses heels. By craft and a skilful choice of positions he defended himself against multitudes, and greatly injured, when he could not conquer them. On the side of the Philistines, also, Dan had a country full of caverns and narrow passes, where the tribe, especially in the deeds of Sampson, rendered itself distinguished by the artifices of war.]

I hope in thy salvation, O Jehovah.

[These words, which have been thought so obscure, and been so variously interpreted, seem to me to derive a pretty clear explanation from the connexion, in which they stand. On the North the land of Judæa was exposed to the most powerful and dangerous attacks, as has been shown by the history of the various conquests and desolating incursions, which it has experienced. And there must Dan have his dwelling place! There must Jehovah bring deliverance to the nation or they must perish. In such deliverance the patriarchal Prophet confided, and by this expression showed how deeply he looked into the condition and wants of the country, which his sons were to inhabit.\*]

Gad ! (a troop) troops oppress him,  
But he shall press upon their rear.

\* The original signifies help, assistance, deliverance. This in all his difficulties Jacob had hoped for and received from God. He hoped for it also for the safety of his sons, when he was obliged to speak of dangerous assaults. This seems to me the easiest and most natural explanation, which the context admits. Every other is far-fetched and unsupported by the context.

[In the original a fourfold play on words. We know not by what crowd of nations Gad was to dwell, for Jacob could hardly have referred to the country beyond Jordan, out of the proper limits of Canaan, where Gad actually inhabited. Yet here in a country of Nomades, on the mountains of Bashan, Gad had occasion to show the import of his name. It was a bold tribe, and Moses saw with sorrow, that it demanded its inheritance beyond Jordan.]

Out of Asher cometh bread, that is rich,  
He it is, that yieldeth dainties for kings.

[This passage was too intelligible not to be obeyed, especially when Moses had given the interpretation.\* Asher obtained a region rich in oil and fruits, between the mountains, and near the sea coast.]

Naphtali is a spreading terebinth,  
He sends up beautiful branches.

[This tribe received a mountainous tract, covered with forests, on the Northern border of Canaan, where it flourished like a terebinth with its luxuriant top. And now Jacob turned to Joseph the benefactor of his family, who stood there as a prince crowned in the midst of his brethren. He did in fact, crown him among them by giving him in his two sons the second prerogative, which he had taken from Reuben, the twofold inheritance; and more than this, because he had been his benefactor, he gave him his more special paternal blessing, the guardian providence of his youth.]

The son of a fruitful mother is Joseph,  
The branch of a fruitful tree by the well,  
Whose branches shoot over the wall.

They were embittered and shot at him,  
And hated him, who are skilful with arrows,  
Yet his bow abode in its strength,

\* Deut. xxxiii. 24. 25.

**His arms and hands moved quickly.**

**From the hands of the mighty God of Jacob,  
From his name, who guarded me upon my rock,\*  
From thy father's God—he stood by thee,  
From the Almighty—he will still bless thee,  
The blessings of heaven above,  
Blessings of the sea that is beneath,  
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.**

**The blessings of thy father prevail  
Above the blessings of my mountains,  
To the glory of the everlasting hills.†  
They shall come on the head of Joseph,  
Of him that was crowned among his brethren.**

{So far as this blessing contains allusions to Rachel and the early history of Joseph, I will not repeat the illustrations of it, which I have given elsewhere.‡ Here it will simply serve us as a map of the region, which Joseph was to possess in Canaan for the two tribes of his posterity. The Patriarch describes it

\* This passage, also, Moses explains, (Deut. xxxiii. 16.) who instead of a watchman over the stone of Israel places the God, who appeared to him in the bush, the guardian God of his life in his first manifestation, as Jacob here names the guardian of his youth, in his earliest appearing. The construction has nothing harsh, if we regard it as the usual abbreviated name of God, as connected with the incident referred to, of the same kind with other local names of God, as Gen. xxii. 14. &c. the God of Bethel. Let one read Gen. xxviii. 15. 20. 21. where the phrase is explained, and say whether an expression more fitting the incident could have been put in the mouth of a shepherd.

† Moses, the most ancient and authentick interpreter of this passage, has understood by the term here used mountains, (Deut. xxxiii. 15.) and the parallelism also requires it. The reference is to the smaller mountains of Canaan, which Jacob looks upon as his own land, and above which, Libanus rises as one of the elevations of the primitive world. The spices and balsamic odours for crowning the head of Joseph are, in the language of poetry, the blessings of the mountains, their costly glory, as Moses describes them elsewhere, Deut. xxxiii. 15.

‡ Briefe das Studium der Theologie betreffend, Th. 1.

in a picture of the life of Joseph. His branches spring up luxuriantly over a fountain where the boughs reach over the wall. He is an invincible archer, whose arms and hands are only rendered the more active by the assault of the bravest enemies. He is crowned with the peculiar blessing of high mountains, where the heavens are expanded above, and the sea spreads beneath, in which image the wish of the father aspires even to the heights of the primitive world. What then were these ancient mountain heights? Moses explains the matter in his benedictions. *He shall trample the nations even to the extremity of the land.* Ephraim, therefore, the mighty unicorn, with his fraternal tribe, was to dwell, probably on the highest Northern elevations of the country, on the skirts of Mount Lebanon. Here was Phiala, the fountain of the river Jordan, by which the fair fruit tree was to be nourished, and here it might shoot its branches upon the wall, and beyond the wall or boundry of the land, and exhibit the active and untiring boldness, for which the father of the tribe was renowned. Here they had the heavens above, and the sea stretching beneath; here the blessings of the everlasting hills, the mountains of the primeval world, from which were to be brought spices and precious things, as a diadem and an unction for the head of him, that was crowned among his brethren. In this way every particular in this pregnant benediction becomes not only consistent but picturesque and local. As Lebanon, like a mountain of the primeval world, overlooks the land of Canaan, crowned with white, and lifts itself to the clouds; as the everlasting cedars, the trees which the Lord hath planted, stand upon it, and its deep vallies beneath are filled with vineyards around the numerous fountains, which flow from them; so shall this tribe flourish, fresh and lively as the vine upon Lebanon,\* as a fruit tree by the fountains of water. The mountain abounds in trees, which yield odorous gums, (from which the Greek name was taken,) spices for the head of Jo-

\* Hos. xiv. 8.

seph, balsams for the head of him, that was crowned. The smell of Lebanon occurs in the song of Solomon and the Prophets,\* as a poetical expression for precious odours and spices. The pass of Hamath, in which Joseph is here placed, as the strongest and most expert archer is the most important for the safety of the whole country, and, according to the figure employed by Moses, Ephraim and Manasseh were to guard it with the strength and vigour of a wild bullock. And who can deny the wisdom exhibited in these conceptions of the Patriarch? The children of his Egyptian son he removed to the greatest distance from Egypt. Those, who held this most difficult pass, he furnished with all the blessings pertaining to royal dignity, bestowed upon them all the honours of heroism, and the invocation of all good from the great and mighty God, the guardian of Israel upon his rocky pillow. There, indeed, he placed the chief reliance for the defence of the country. Below, in the South, a lion, the heroic Judah, was to be the watchman, on the Northern frontier the wild bullock was to stand in the passes of the mountains.—And Benjamin also, a tribe most nearly related by blood, was to be at the side of Joseph.]

Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf,  
In the morning he shall tear the prey,  
In the evening divide the spoil,

because contending parties in the East go out for plunder, morning and evening. He also was to dwell in these mountainous regions.

This arrangement, too, we know was not adhered to. When Judah had taken his portion, Ephraim the tribe second in power sought to do the same, and took what was neither destined for him, nor satisfied him, when obtained. Benjamin

\* Hos. xiv, 7. Song of S. iv. 11. The flowers, the pastures, the fountains, the scenery of Lebanon, are in like manner praised in Nahum, i, 4. Isa. xl. 16. Song of S. iv, 15. &c.

remained by his side. The praise of the Patriarch given to his benefactor was therefore the cause, that the sons of Joseph did not prove deserving of the praise bestowed. In the mean time, it appears that a remembrance of the original appointment still remained in Israel. The Prophet, who most especially prophesied to Ephraim, Hosea, employs the finest images of Lebanon. His roots shall branch out, his boughs shall spread and diffuse a fragrance like Lebanon. He shall flourish like the vineyards, his remembrance be vivifying like the wines of Lebanon. The mountains of Ephraim also are united with the Northern region of Dan, which lay at the foot of Lebanon, (Jer. iv. 15. 16.), and thus Joseph becomes peculiarly the crown of the land.

Thus did the ancient Patriarchal shepherd picture to himself the settlement of his tribes, and the country would have been invincible, if Lebanon, Jordan, the sea, and the desert, well guarded, had encompassed it. His benediction rises like a palm tree, whose branches spread wider and wider, till it becomes at length as a cedar of God upon the mountains. Had Israel gone thither earlier, and extended themselves by degrees, or when they came at length with united and persevering force, then would there have come to be a resident force, formed with the invincible banners, which guided them in the desert, and which later tradition combined into images of the cloudy chariots of God ; a perpetual phalanx, and in the midst of it the tabernacle of Jehovah.

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We come now to the sad contrast of the blessing of Moses with that of Jacob. Here the speaker was no longer a father, who could look over the land with a peaceful and tranquil eye, and divide it as his own among his shepherd sons. It was the wearied lawgiver, who saw his grave opening before him, and had spent his life among an undeserving people. Two tribes

and a half had already violated the plan of Jacob, and of the rest he could expect but little good. He clothed his last wishes, therefore, in the form of a prayer, and his admonitory and encouraging proposals in the form of a benediction, which however, should be considered no less an earnest injunction, than the last will of Jacob. The piece is composed of definite and well considered expressions, the political testament of a departing sage.

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### BLESSING OF MOSES THE MAN OF GOD UPON ISRAEL

IN VIEW OF HIS APPROACHING DEATH.

He said,

Jehovah came from Sinai,  
Went forth to them from Seir,  
Shone forth from Mount Paran.  
He came from mountains of Kadesh,  
And round him was radiant fire.\*

How greatly doth he love the tribes,  
All the pomp of his glory is around him,  
And every one at thy feet†

\* That the common construction of the term here as *a fiery law* is harsh, every one is sensible and here too it does not suit the context. God comes v. 2. 3. as a teacher of the people, while the tribes sit at his feet to learn of him. Moses becomes their teacher, and his law is the utterance of the mouth of the Most High, a far more dignified image, than when God is represented as bringing it in his hand. I prefer rather to consider the radiant glory of the right hand in the 3d verse, as placed in contrast with the expression described in the second, and pomp and majesty distinguished from grace. Habakkuk explains the image, and interprets it by radiant fire, shooting rays. In later times these images were converted into the *διατάξεις ἀγγέλων*, the ranks and orders of angels, and this illustrates their meaning.

† How fine a contrast have we here of fearful majesty and condescending grace. Only Moses could thus have spoken of the giving of the law. The word used in the 3d verse means plainly, not angels, but the assembled tribes which had been already named, and are again referred to v. 5. They sit at the feet of their father, who teaches and admonishes them as children. The notion of angels teaching is a later rabbinical interpretation.

Received thy commandment.

Moses enjoined on us the law,  
A heritage of the congregation of Jacob,  
For he was king of Israel.  
All the heads of the people assembled,  
And the tribes of Israel.

[Thus was Israel to learn respect and reverence for the law as a Divine economy, freely adopted as the instructive lore of Divine wisdom and truth. Moses was their king but only among the assembled chiefs of the nation, and therefore, in a free state. In this character, also, he uttered his last words, and at the same time connected with them the reverence, which he gave to the Divine Being, the dignity and love.]

Let Reuben live, and not die,  
His people shall be multiplied.

[A small blessing is this, which is thus bestowed upon the first tribe, at all times, but yet a blessing. Simeon is passed by, because, in following the benediction of Jacob, Moses had no land which he could apportion to that tribe.]

To Judah he said,

Hear, O Jehovah, the voice of Judah,  
And bring him unto his people,\*  
His arm will contend bravely,  
And, when his enemies oppress him,  
Thou wilt be his salvation.

[The blessing conferred upon Judah, also, is small compared with that bestowed by Jacob. Yet he is not undistinguished here, and is reminded of his duty to be the leader in conflict.]

To Levi he said,

\* The people, to whom Judah is to be conducted, is probably the same, of which Jacob had assured him, Gen. xlix. 10. his distinguished and primary inheritance. Here slept the bones of the Patriarchs. He was to give his name to the nation, and this was to adhere to him as its leader. Hence the expression.



Thy light and right thou confidest  
 To the true, the devoted man,  
 Whom thou didst prove at the place of trial,  
 And strive with at the waters of strife.

He said to his father and his mother,  
 "I know you not,"  
 And remembered not his brethren,  
 Nor acknowledged his children.\*

So shall they also keep thy word,  
 And observe thy covenant,  
 Shall teach Jacob thy judgments,  
 And Israel thy law.

They shall burn incense before thee,  
 And sacrifices upon thine altar.

Bless, O Jehovah, their power,  
 Accept the work of their hands.  
 Strike down him,<sup>f</sup> that riseth against them,  
 And him that hateth them, that he rise not again.

[Here we perceive the feelings of the Levite blessing with hearty sincerity his own tribe. He speaks as the brother of Aaron, and honours his memory, not only by recollecting, that God had bestowed upon him the highest judicial authority, but also that he, who first bore the sacred breastplate, was a man of great integrity, and unsullied character. Almost he murmurs against God, that for a single and trifling fault he had contended so severely with him. He calls it an unhappy spot, the guilt of which that upright devoted man, was doomed to expiate with his life, and at the same time impliedly excuses his own conduct. For he, too, was in the same condemnation, on account of which, also, he is now called to meet his approaching death. (Num. xx. 1—8 and Deut. xxxii. 50. 51.) The transition from the praise of Aaron to the duties of

\* The construction, which I have given this verse in the translation, imparts to it, as I think, dignity and clearness. The word in the singular refers to Aaron, the following plural to the Levites, who were bound to imitate his noble example of impartiality in giving judgment, and of faithful adherence to God their rightful Lord.

his tribe, is very beautiful. The memorial of him, who first bore the sacred breastplate of judgment, was to be their enduring model. Their duties are expressed as hopes, and God is entreated to take part with the tribe, which was so necessary to maintain the constitution of the country, and had so many enemies. This benediction of the lawgiver is beautifully conceived, but we have already spoken of it at large.]

To Benjamin he said,

The beloved of Jehovah shall dwell safely,  
The Most high hovereth over him daily,  
And giveth him rest between his wings.

[This blessing is tender in sentiment, and entirely changed from the character of Jacob's. The ravening wolf is here again the same Benjamin, whom his father restrained from the hazards of a journey, and carefully commended to the guardianship of his brethren. So Moses commends him to the protecting care of Jehovah under the frequent and favourite image of an eagle.\* This bird hovers over its young, supports them, when about to fall, and permits them to rest upon its back and between its wings. All this the paternal lawgiver applies to Benjamin.†]

To Joseph he said,

Blessed of Jehovah is thy land,  
With precious things of the heaven above,  
And the sea from its bosom beneath,  
With precious things produced by the sea,

\*Gen. xliii. †Deut. xxxiii. 11. Ex. xix. 4.

‡It is not shown that shoulders (either of God or Benjamin) means mountains, and the discourse here is not of the mountains of Benjamin, between which God should dwell. Between the mountains Moriah and Zion, even had they belonged to Benjamin, Jehovah never dwelt. There was a cleft between them, but the temple stood upon the mountain. The Hebrew text here must be read as the 70 read it.

And precious things brought forth by the moon,  
 The good, that grows from Eastern mountains,  
 The beautiful, that springs from ancient hills,  
 All precious things, which the earth produces,  
 And the favor of him that appeared in the bush,  
 Let them come upon the head of Joseph,  
 Of him who was crowned among his brethren.

His glory is like that of the firstborn bullock,  
 His horns as the horns of a wild ox,  
 With them he pusheth the nations,  
 Even to the extremity of the land.  
 This will the ten thousands of Ephraim do,  
 And the thousands of Manasseh.

[The blessing of Moses upon the tribes is rich and instructive. He paraphrases the blessing of Jacob, and adapts it to his age, and to his own views. The blessings from heaven he explains by the dew, and of the sea by the effluxes of the nether sea, which in ancient physics was the source of fertility. In like manner the influences of the sun and of the moon are referred to the precious products, which attend upon the revolutions of the year and the months. The everlasting mountains of Jacob he places in the East, because from that direction were brought at that period the costly spices, gold, &c. The corresponding word in the blessing of Jacob he took in the sense of a bullock, and invests Ephraim in the heroic stateliness of a firstborn of the species. So also by the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manassah he has reference to the expression of the Patriarch, who made Ephraim the firstborn of the sons of Joseph. Thus the blessing is expressed with instructive reference to this more ancient document. It was however hardly fulfilled, since Ephraim did not receive the extremities of the land for his possession, and perhaps the very passage, which Moses has here devoted to him and Benjamin, contributed to prevent the fulfilment of the direction which it contains. Benjamin placed himself between two strong shoulders the powerful tribes

of Ephraim and Judah. Ephraim at an early period chose his portion in the middle of the country, which was indeed fertile, but did not correspond with the fulness of blessings, which were here described.]

To Zebulon he said,

Rejoice, Zebulon, in thy commerce,  
And, Issachar, in thy tents.  
The tribes shall proclaim your mountain,\*  
Where rightful sacrifices shall be offered,  
For there can they draw the influx of the sea,  
And the hidden treasures of the sand.

[Since I have too much to say on these words to suit this connexion, I shall defer it for an appendix to this chapter, and throw the explanation of the next benediction into a note.]

To Gad he said,

Blessed be God, who hath enlarged Gad,  
He dwelleth as a lion, the arm and the head are his prey.  
The first spoil of conquest he chose for himself,

\*I shall here only defend the translation on grammatical grounds. It is strictly a literal one. That the word commonly rendered nations means the tribes, is shown in the 3d and 21st verses, and that the mountains mentioned must be near these tribes, is shown by the local circumstances which follow, which refer to the harbour near Acco, as well as to the place where glass was first made. Of calling strange nations to a mountain in the tribe of Judah, in order to draw there the treasures of the sea, the text says nothing.

†The blessing bestowed upon Gad contains both praise and censure; praise for heroism, since Gad was the first of the three tribes, which joined his troop. Hence he calls him the leader, and says that like a lion he has seized for himself a fair inheritance, and there already protected he dwells in proud security, while his brethren still wander in tents. Yet he gives praise for the promise made still in future to go forward with the host, until all the wars (the judgments of God upon Canaan) are completed. In the first expedition the tribe of Gad did so, and went in advance of the host. (Jos. iv. 12.)

Because the portion of his princes was then safe.  
 Yet will he march onward with the host,  
 To finish the wars of Jehovah,  
 And to execute the judgments of God  
 With Israel—

To Dan he said,

Dan also is a young lion,  
 He leapeth forth upon Bashan,

[where at that time perhaps the tribe was stationed. The purpose of Moses is therefore to call upon the tribe, and excite them to the conquest of the land.]

To Naphtali he said,

O Naphtali, satisfied with favours,  
 And filled with the blessings of Jehovah,  
 Possess thou the sea and the land of the South,

[that is on the sea of Gennesareth, at the southern part probably, according to the command of Jacob.]

To Asher he said,

Blessed shall Asher be among the tribes,  
 He shall be acceptable to his brethren,  
 And shall dip his feet in oil.  
 Brass and iron shall be thy bolts,  
 And as thy days so shall thy strength increase.

[The more he uses the products of his country, the more shall his wealth and power increase, and thereby also shall he be serviceable to his brethren. The blessing of Jacob is again altered with reference to political and national considerations. Asher was not to serve foreign kings with his iron and fine oil, but his brethren. Thus Moses united the tribes together, and aimed to animate the whole in their various residences with one paternal impulse, with one self-improving spirit of industry and national feeling.]

There is none, O Israel, like God,  
 Who rideth on the heavens for thy help,  
 And in his majesty on thy lofty clouds.

Thy protector is the eternal God,\*  
 Thou art beneath his everlasting arm,  
 He thrusteth out the enemy  
 From before thine eyes,  
 And saith "destroy them"!  
 Yea Israel shall dwell  
 Securely and alone.  
 The eye of Jacob looketh upon a land,  
 That is full of corn and wine,  
 On which the heaven droppeth dew.  
 Happy art thou O Israel.  
 Where is a people like thee,  
 Whom Jehovah protecteth?  
 He is the shield of thy help,  
 And the sword of thine excellency.  
 Let thy foes seek thee with guile,  
 Yet shalt thou in triumph  
 Tread upon their high places.

With such words of golden richness does Moses take leave of his people. He builds their hopes on God, represents their land as the object of his love, that land, from which they looked down from the heights of Bashan and Gilcad. Here shut out from the nations, secure and alone, should Israel dwell, nourished, not as Egypt by the river, but immediately by the dew of heaven, and the hand of Jehovah. A bold mountain race should Jeshurun become, and though the crafty wiles of their enemies were unceasing, should proceed, till they trod as conquerors on all their high places. Would that the will of Moses had been accomplished! The country lies apart, surrounded and limited by mountains, seas, riv-

\*That this is the most emphatic word used by Moses to express the eternity and inviolable truth of God we know from Ps. xc. 1. By the words here used and the triumphal march of God in the clouds he reminds us of his ancient wonders.

ers and deserts; a small, but divinely chosen spot, which, cultivated with diligence and guarded by the united force of the tribes, might have flourished. It lies as it were between the three divisions of the Eastern continent, in the boundless Asia, at the foot of these rich mountains of the primitive world, and is their outlet and haven. Above and below Judæa were the routes of the trade of the ancient world. So far as its situation is concerned, it might have been the happiest people in the world, had they used their advantages, and remained true to the spirit of their ancient law. Poor, and now barren, and naked land! in which partly through sacred poetry and song, but yet more through the consequences of misfortune and folly, we know almost every glen and hill, every valley and village, which ages ago in the history of mankind wast famed for superstition, blood and war, wilt thou ever enjoy a better renown? or are the mountains, on which thy Prophets trod, once so fruitful, doomed henceforth to perpetual desolation?

## TABOR, THE MOUNTAIN OF THE SANCTUARY

AS AN IDEA OF MOSES.

To Zebulon he said,

Rejoice, Zebulon, in thy commerce,  
And, Issachar, in thy tents.  
The tribes shall proclaim your mountain,  
Where rightful sacrifices shall be offered,  
For there can they draw the influx of the sea,  
And the hidden treasures of the sand.

Wherefore does Moses unite two tribes together here, and those too so opposite to each other? He himself explains, that he does it on account of a mountain, which the tribes would proclaim for the place of the sanctuary, and of the regular sacrifices; for here, he proceeds, will they be able to enjoy the influx of the sea, and to behold, to acquire, and use,

rare and beautiful productions, the secret treasures of the sand, the glass made in that vicinity. He allures them, therefore, to the place of their national assemblies by the influence of profit and curiosity.

What mountain then was it, which he did not, indeed, enjoin, but proposed to them as a free people? It could be no other than Tabor.

Tabor lies between Zebulon and Issachar, and forms the mutual boundary of the tribes. It lies directly against the bay of Acco, the most natural harbour on the whole coast. The lake Cendevia, where glass was most anciently produced, is not far from it, and the river Belus, so well known on account of this production, derives a part of its waters from Tabor. The reasons assigned, also, suit no other mountain than this, and the very words clearly and literally point it out. The thing spoken of is not the calling of *foreign* nations to a mountain, (in the desert somewhere and at a distance from these tribes,) but the tribes are to proclaim a mountain for the place of their Sanctuary, where they could have the advantages and gratifications pointed out, and such was Tabor.

How judicious, and; on whatever side we consider it, how wise was this idea of Moses! This was in name the umbilicus, or middle point of the country, and in destination was to have been, like the Delphic Oracle in Greece, the central place of assemblage for the tribes. In choosing Zion for the place of meeting in the lower section of the land they subjected the upper tribes to the necessity of a long and disproportionate journey. The consequence was, that they visited it but seldom, and with great difficulty, and on the first favourable occasion the ten tribes fell off from this sanctuary, and chose for themselves more convenient places at Dan and Bethel. Had the conquest of the land been prosecuted according to the intention of Jacob and Moses, and extended as far as Mount Lebanon, there would have been no place so central and convenient as Mount Tabor.



This mountain, too, by its nature and position, was marked out as a place for a national assemblage. It rises in the midst of a very fertile plain, and all travellers agree in their account of its remarkably beautiful appearance. Apart from all other mountains, it stands alone upon its delightful plain, perfectly round, as if shaped by the hand of art. It is difficult of ascent, and therefore a natural strong hold, and occupied for that purpose against the Romans at the time of their conquest. In the lower part it is rocky, but above covered even to the summit with thick shrubbery, vines, olives and other fruit trees, as if encircled with a verdant crown, while the branches are everywhere vocal with the song of birds. It affords a wide and beautiful prospect, and Jeremiah says of a hero he shall move with dignity, like Tabor among the mountains. Its summit is an elliptical plain, a stadium in breadth, and two in length. In every respect, then, how beautifully was it fitted for the sacred tabernacle of a people inhabiting the mountains! and how much more beautiful the scenes, which would here have been celebrated by the sacred poets, than those around the small and barren Mount Zion; scenes, in which the fertility of the country, the view of tribes happily united and leagued in harmony, of the sea, the lake, and the river Jordan, would have mingled in their descriptions. The Kishon and the Kadumim, which flow from this mountain, would have resounded in these sacred songs, instead of that small brook, which is now celebrated in the Psalms.

Such was this mountain, as to its natural form and position, nor was it less eligible from its relation to the political divisions of the country. It was situated between two tribes, which were not the most ambitious, but the most industrious and most profitably employed, and belonged exclusively to neither. These were more than any others able to furnish provision and entertainment for the national assemblies. From its fruitful plains the tribe of Issachar could provide sacrifices, and thereby derive a revenue from the products of its soil.

**Zebulon** lay upon the sea, and could enjoy a profitable trade with the neighbouring commercial cities, as the lawgiver distinctly intimates. Here no rivalry between the tribes was to be feared, for both were sons of the same virtuous mother, and second to none in dignity and worth, while at the same time they contended with none for precedence in rank. They enjoyed their advantageous situation with quiet industry, and on this Moses himself had reckoned. This is plain, if we compare his benediction with that of Jacob. The Patriarch had compared Issachar with a patient beast of burden, and on that account placed him in this fertile region to distribute water to neighbouring herds. Moses, therefore, who neither could nor would look to Canaanitish slaves and Gibeonites to bring wood and water to the Sanctuary, placed this in a region, which had the patient beast of burden of the Patriarch on the one side, and the dealer in foreign merchandize on the other, on both sides means for accommodation and interesting excitement. Where were these to be found in the deserts of the tribe of Judah? and yet we know the national festivals were designed for national amusement and for trade. Its vicinity to one of the finest harbours on the coast would have brought to Mount Tabor, besides the people of the country, strangers from thence at the time of the national festivals, would have awakened industry and promoted the interchange of commodities throughout the land. For on the one hand was Acco, on the other Gennesareth, flourishing communities on all sides, and Tabor the crown and pride of all at the point of union in the midst.

Yet alas! it was not chosen, and the wise conception of the legislator was neglected. The rude people idly suffered the ark of the covenant to remain where it first rested, and visited it but seldom. Every one was eager to seize upon his own possession, and no one concerned himself for the common interests and organization of the combined whole, for Moses was dead, Joshua was now old, and Eliczer weak or destitute

of the necessary influence. Soon the ark fell into the hands of the Philistines, and was entertained as a guest here and there,—until David took possession of it, and fixed it permanently upon his own Zion.

By thus establishing upon the same mountain, and one too but recently gained as a conquest by himself, his own residence and the tabernacle of God, this monarch, no doubt, added both power and glory to his reign. The circumstances of his own life, and of the tribe from which he sprung, and in which he could most fully confide, made this choice moreover necessary for him. Yet it is none the less true, and the result clearly proved it, that the more enlarged plan of Moses for uniting all the tribes as brethren, by a more free and more central place for their national assemblages and festivals, was thereby forever defeated, and an apple of discord, by the arrangement which David adopted, was thrown among the tribes to their final separation. Ephraim and Judah were rivals for precedence in rank, because in the blessing of the Patriarch both were invested with a crown. And because under the family of David the tribe of Judah acquired an undue share of power and honour, Ephraim combined with the other tribes, and chose along with their own king their separate places, also, for their sacred assemblies. Only Judah and Benjamin remained united, and they plainly because the temple, which was built upon mountains belonging to them in common, held them together—a proof, that, had this been placed elsewhere, it might have exerted the same fine influence upon all, which was now felt by these two tribes alone. The nation had lost its balance; the point of union was thrown from the centre into a corner of the country.

If we look for the cause of this evil, we find it indeed, in a source of itself innocent enough, the benedictions of Jacob. From gratitude to Joseph and respect for the heroism of Judah he had given to these two sons, prerogatives, which were abused by their weaker posterity. It was the injunction of

Moses, that the country should not be divided, until the whole was in their possession, and should then be apportioned according to the population of the several tribes. The command was reasonable and necessary, for if the more powerful tribes seized upon their portion before this, who was to support the weaker and aid them in securing theirs? And how, too, in that case, would an equitable apportionment of the whole be possible? Yet the injunction was not carried into effect. Moses was already before his death compelled to give some of the tribes their portion beyond the river Jordan. We know that he did this unwillingly, and bound them by an oath still to go forward and aid their brethren in completing the conquest of Canaan. It was, however, never completed. So soon as Joshua had made one or two successful expeditions, the two most powerful tribes, Judah and Ephraim, seized upon and appropriated more than half of the whole country. In the mean time the weaker tribes wandered about and made terms with the Canaanites as they best could. The division was three times repeated before all the tribes were able to find their possessions. Some of them, indeed, were still inadequately provided and compelled to seek for new dwellings. Those which were treated with neglect by Jacob, obviously suffered by it, and it was not without reason, that Moses so often impressed it upon the people, "that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children only to the third or fourth, but extends his blessings to the thousandth generation." For what fault was it of the tribes of Simeon and Levi, that their fathers had done a foolish and rash deed? How was Dan to blame, that he was born of a concubine, and almost forgotten in the distribution of blessings? In short, the land was divided without system or equality, the Northern part not wholly conquered, and what was worse the most warlike tribes were settled, where there was the least danger of assault, in the middle of the country. The parts most exposed to danger, on the contrary, were apportioned to the smaller and feebler. From

**Egypt, Canaan had nothing to fear, and every tribe was able to defend itself against the Arabian hordes ; but on the North, towards Syria, Assyria and Babylon, it was otherwise, and there Jacob and Moses had assigned to Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin their several portions. Here the frontier was now left unprotected, and hence the hostile assaults, in which, first Israel, and finally Judah was destroyed, came in that direction. The nation, indeed, was exposed to ruin even from the Canaanites, because they were divided, and did not prosecute the war, till their conquest was completed. There was no general supervision, and no wise apportionment of the whole was any longer possible. Of the sanctuary, which Moses had carefully placed rather to the North than the South, no thought was taken, no bond of union was preserved among the tribes, and they became one by one the prey of the most despicable enemies.**

In the mean time the beautiful Tabor remained what it was, and in its native pride and luxuriance, as described in one of the Psalms, spoke the praises of its creator. Indeed, in its relation to the political interests of the nation it became (from its natural advantages of form and situation) the first theatre of victory and of national deliverance,\* and hence will forever flourish, at least as the mount of heroism and liberty, in the song of Deborah.

\* Jud. iv. 5.

## VII.

### . TRIUMPHAL SONGS OF THE ISRAELITES.

**History of Balaam**, considered with reference to the age, in which he lived. Propensity of ancient, uncultivated nations, especially in the East, to confide in Prophetic benedictions, and the arts of soothsayers. Influence of Moses against this. Design of the song of the well, which he introduces. Dreams, trances and visions of the Prophet and soothsayer. Vision of Balaam. Its purpose. Probability of it in the mind of an Eastern conjurer. The language of benediction and triumph uttered by Balaam. Of whom it was spoken. How they came into the possession of the Israelites, and in what way probably they were preserved.

**Book of the wars of Jehovah.** Fragments derived from it. Poetical explanation of the altar of Moses. Whether Amalek or Moses raised his hands towards the throne of God. Song of triumph over the Amalekites. Poetical passages in the Books of Joshua and Judges. Of the standing still of the sun and moon. Of the sound of the trumpets at Jericho. Age of poetry in the Book of Judges. Difference between such an age and one of political order and social happiness like ours. Tone of the narrative in these heroic tales. Animation in the description of remarkable events and heroes. Example in the story of Sampson. Triumphal song of Deborah, accompanied with remarks and an appendix.

In the foregoing section I have treated of two blessings pronounced upon Israel, from different periods in their history, and in different styles of expression; I shall now add to them another, more strongly marked, than either, in the boldness of its composition, and the crown of the whole. It is the prophecy of Balaam, when he saw the camp of Israel. But the history, which precedes, is the subject of so many contradictory opinions, that it will be necessary to exhibit it with some

care in the light which seems to me most natural with reference to time and place.

When Israel went against Moab, and the king of this people felt himself too weak to withstand them, he sent\* for a celebrated soothsayer to affect by imprecations, what he could not do by the power of his arms. This circumstance has nothing strange in it, if we take into view the notions of ancient tribes, or even of rude nations of the present day, as we learn them from history and the accounts of travellers. They attached much importance to the imprecations and blessings of their soothsayers. They believed that inisfortune awaited them, if they had offended one of these, and even ascribed invincible power to the precise words and figures of the curse or of the blessing. The history of superstition among all nations, not even excepting the better informed and ingenious Greeks and Romans,† bears witness to this. That such should be the case in the East, therefore, and among the rude people of a mountainous district, is nothing peculiar. It was one among the imperishable and peculiar merits of Moses, that surrounded, as he was, by superstitious tribes, he directly opposed in his system of laws superstitious practices, and did not tolerate enchantments, magical imprecations, and blessings. The song of the well, which belongs to this period, was introduced perhaps for this very purpose, to guard against the superstition of the people.‡

Spring up, O well,

Sing ye unto it.

\*Num. xxii. 1. †The latter it is well known had their incantatores.

‡Num. xxi. 16. The Arabs still believe in the power to charm fish, so that they shall come in heaps if they call to them tal! tal! (come!) and precisely these are the first words of the song. (See Nubhrs Reisen Th. 2.) Among other nations also I have read of similar words of enchantment, by which they believed, that water could be made to flow up from the earth,

The princes digged the well,  
 The nobles pointed it out,  
 With their scepters,  
 With their staves.

Perhaps Moses caused the place to be marked by the staves of the leaders, that no enchanter's rod might be permitted to approach it. Balaam himself was obliged to confess, "that enchantment had no power against Israel, and that no benediction could prevail against Jacob." Considered in this light, therefore, the story is to the honour of Israel; Moses shows, by the example of the most celebrated soothsayer, how vain, and how subject to the control of God, was this art, which he had forbidden.

The messengers sent by Balak came with presents, and Balaam had a wish to follow them, when the guardian God of the people, whom he was to curse, in a nightly vision forbade the journey. Here too I find nothing, that should be thought strange. Were not dreams in these ancient times honoured and permitted to have great influence among all nations? Was not the mind of a soothsayer, who as he says,

With open eyes uttered his oracles,  
 Who listened to the words of God,  
 And saw the visions of the Almighty,  
 Who fell in a trance but saw clearly,

was not the mind of such a man, who believed, that even waking he experienced such trances, be still more likely to see visions in the quiet hours of sleep? And why should not God employ the way of access to him most accordant with the laws of nature, as he gave commands in dreams, or awakened conceptions, in the minds of Abimelech, of Nebuchadnezzar and other pagans. The result was, that Balaam, daunted by the guardian God of Israel, refused to accompany the messengers of Balak.

Other messengers were then sent with still greater presents,



The heart of the diviner was tempted, and God permitted him to go. Yet however with the express prohibition to say any thing else, than that, which he put in his mouth. Still more to alarm the dealer in benedictions, that fearful vision appeared to him in the way, of which so much has been said. The vision, it is to be observed, appeared to him by degrees. The ass went out of the way, pressed against the wall, fell upon her knees; and now the vision began to appear in the mind of the soothsayer. He hears the ass speak, he sees the messenger of Jehovah with a drawn sword, (perhaps a flame of fire flashing or blazing up before him) and finally he hears a voice. The messenger of Jehovah, who stood before him in the way, reproached him, because, with less understanding than his ass, he had not heeded the less marked presentiments of his mind. He threatens to slay him and save the brute, and gives him finally another strict charge to say nothing but that which God should suggest to him. Thus impressed with fear he proceeds onward, his mouth restrained as with a bridle.

In this incident too I see nothing, which would not correspond with the character of a soothsayer. Let one read accounts of travels in all countries, where such still exist, and he will see with astonishment of what vehement excitements of the imagination they are capable. Their souls wander from their bodies, which in the mean time lie apparently lifeless, and bring accounts of what they have seen in this and that place, to which they have just been. So too of their divinations which are confided in by the people, and at which the most intelligent travellers have been confounded. All in fact look with wonder upon the feats of these men, and the unnatural states, which they assume, and compared with which the vision and trance of Balaam are but trifles. Why then should not the Divine Being, who would now employ the voice of this crafty diviner going not in fact to curse but to bless, proceed in the way, which was the most customary and most effectual upon the mind of the diviner. A fearful phenomenon was to meet

him in the way. He actually heard and saw, in a waking vision, what is here related, and how trifling for us to enquire, whether the ass actually spoke? and how? whether and in what way God gave her reason and human organs of speech &c.? To the diviner the ass spake in a vision, that is, he heard a voice and saw an appearance. She could not have spoken to us, unless we would also have become diviners.

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From a man of such imagination we should expect effusions of a bold and elevated character, and such they are. They possess the highest dignity, brevity, animation and copiousness of imagery. There is little in the later Prophets, and nothing in the discourses of Moses, that equals them in this respect. They stand somewhere in the same rank with the Book of Job, and the narrative, by which they are introduced, with all these dreams and visions, with the fearful climax of warnings, the various high places with seven altars upon each—all this is so simple, told with such emphasis and symmetry of parts, that we seem to be brought, by a kind of magic ladder, to that for which such preparation is made.

#### BLESSINGS OF BALAAM UPON THE CAMP OF ISRAEL.

Balak the king of Moab brought me from Aram,  
 Called me from the mountains of the East.  
 Come hither, and curse me Jacob,  
 Come hither, and denounce Israel,  
 How can I curse whom God hath not cursed?  
 How can I denounce whom God hath not denounced?  
 From the rocky summit I behold the nation,  
 From the Mountain tops I survey them.  
 Behold a people, that dwelleth alone,  
 And joins itself not with the nations.  
 Who can count the dust of Jacob?  
 Or number the fourth of Israel?

Let me but die the death of the righteous,\*  
And let my last end be like his.

The king is alarmed, that Balaam, instead of pronouncing a curse, utters a blessing; and as if this was an unlucky spot where perhaps no sacrifices would avail, or he received only unfavourable visions, he conducts him to another place, from which he could have a view of the whole people to the farthermost tent, in short to the top of mount Pisgah. Seven altars are built, seven offerings brought, and Balak with the princes of Moab remained by the offering. The soothsayer retires again into solitude, that God may meet with him. He returns and says.

Stand up, O Balak, and hear,  
Hearken to me, thou son of Zippor,  
God is not a man, that he should lie,  
Nor the son of man, that he should repent.  
Hath he said, and shall he not do it?  
Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?  
Behold I have received a blessing,  
He hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.  
No evil is to be seen upon Jacob,  
No misfortune impends over Israel.  
Jehovah his God is with him,  
The shout of a king in his midst.  
God hath brought him out of Egypt,  
Like a wild bullock is his strength.  
No enchantment prevails against Jacob,  
Nor any divination against Israel.  
According to the times it shall be told him,  
What God hath resolved to be done.†  
Behold this people, they rise up as a lion,  
And lift themselves up as a young lion.  
He lieth not down, till he eat the prey,  
And drink the blood of the slain.

\*Jeshurun seems to be a term of distinction for Israel, nearly in the sense of *αγαθος* in the most ancient times. It often occurs as a name of Israel, and in the song of Solomon all the lovers of Solomon are *καλοι κα' αγαθοι*.

†A fine distinction between a diviner and a true Prophet.

Now Balak entreats, that if he will not curse, he shall at least not bless Israel; and conducts him to a third place, to the top of Peor, which looks towards the desert. After the altars are built, and the sacrifices offered, the diviner goes no farther to seek for auguries. He raises his eyes, and looks upon Israel encamped by tribes. He is filled with enthusiasm, takes up his parable, and says,

Thus saith Balaam, the son of Beor,  
 Thus saith the man, whose eyes are open,  
 He saith it, who heareth the words of God,  
 Who seeth the vision of the Almighty,  
 Falleth in a trance, and seeth with open eye.

How beautiful are thy tents, O Jacob,  
 And thy dwelling places, O Israel,  
 As rivers spread themselves abroad,  
 As gardens by the river's side,  
 As aloes, which God hath planted,  
 As cedar trees, beside waters.  
 Waters run from their fountains,  
 And many streams shall be his offspring.  
 His king shall be higher than Agag,  
 And his kingdom shall be exalted.  
 God hath brought him out of Egypt,  
 As of a wild bullock is his race,  
 He devoureth the nations his enemies,  
 He breaketh in pieces their bones,  
 And pierceth them with his arrows.  
 He coucheth and lieth down as a lion,  
 As a young lion, who shall rouse him up?  
 Blessed is he, that blesseth thee,  
 And cursed is he, that curseth thee.

Balak enraged smites his hands together, and commands him to depart to his own place. Balaam in taking leave instructs him farther, however, what this nation shall do to his own people in later times. Here the prophecy reaches its highest point of sublimity.

Thus saith Balaam, the son of Beor,  
 Thus saith the man, whose eyes are open,

He saith, who heareth the words of God,  
And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High,  
Who saw the vision of the Almighty,  
Falling down, but with eyes open.

I see him, but he is not yet,  
I behold him, but he is yet afar off.  
There cometh a star out of Jacob,\*  
A sceptre riseth out of Israel,  
Which smiteth the corners of Moab,  
And destroyeth his high fortresses,†  
Edom is his possession,  
The hostile Seir his conquest,  
Israel doth valiant deeds,  
Out of Jacob cometh a conqueror,  
And wasteth the remnant of the habitations.

He then looked abroad upon Amalek, took up his parable,  
and said,

Amalek the first among the nations,  
His end shall be—to perish forever.

He looked upon the Kenites, took up his parable, and said,

Strong is thy dwelling place,  
Thou puttest thy nest in a rock,  
Yet shall the Kenite be wasted,  
Till Asshur carry thee away captive.

Again he took up his parable, and said,

Who shall live, when God doeth this ?  
Ships from Italia's coasts,  
Bring down the pride of Asshur,  
And humble the pride of Eber.  
He also shall perish forever.

\* David the conqueror of the Moabites.

† The “fortresses” are obviously in parallelism with the “corners of Moab.” If the one signifies the fortified summits and angles of the mountains, then the other signifies the towers built on these, or the men who garrison them. Children of Seth is a term, that could have no meaning here, as distinguishing the family descent,

And Balaam rose up, and departed to go to his own place, and Balak also arose up and went his way.

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What a crown of triumph for Israel ! a crown of laurel, that becomes continually more precious with age. And was this an artifice of the Moabites ? a device for their own injury ? and for the glory of Israel ? If it be an artifice, it must be one of Moses, or of some later Hebrew poet. And to whom then could it be ascribed ? What later poet has figurative language so bold as this ?

“ But of what consequence was it whether a foreign soothsayer uttered curses or blessings upon Israel ? ” Let us consider, that they were uttered not for effect upon us, but upon Israel and Moab. The Israelites, already disheartened at the war, would have been, perhaps, still more discouraged, had a soothsayer so famous as Balaam imprecated evil upon them ; as on the other hand it failed to raise the courage of the Moabites, when they heard such destinies announced. Thus Jehovah here adapted himself to the weakness of the host of Israel, and seized upon the device of the enemy, which was to have rendered them hopeless, and converted it into a means of inspiring them with new courage.

“ But how came it to the knowledge of the Israelites ? ” In answer to this let us enquire, how Moab and the Israelites were situated, and it will be seen, that, as Balaam came from the mountains of the East, he must have passed by or through the hosts of the Israelites. The history of the blessings were probably recorded in the Book of the wars of Jehovah, from which several poetical extracts and songs are introduced in this place.\* Thus we can at least conjecture, whence it came, and how it was preserved. Let us look at these other songs !

\* Num. xxi, 14—30,

When Moses, compelled by necessity, smote Amalek, he began a book of the wars of Jehovah, that was afterwards continued. Only a few poetical passages of it, however, remain. A passage from the triumph of Moses over Amalek.\*

I will blot out, utterly blot out  
The memory of Amalek from under heaven.

The altar, which Moses built, and which he called "Jehovah, my banner of triumph," has in like manner a poetical explanation.

Because my hand was raised to Jehovah's throne,  
Jehovah will have war with Amalek,  
From generation to generation.

It was not the hand of Amalek, but that of Moses, that was raised to Jehovah during the battle. It was supported by a stone, and this suggested the idea of an altar, which was called the "banner of victory." As a conqueror Moses had raised his hand to the throne of Jehovah.

We find afterwards other poems from this book.† The song of the well was before introduced, and a triumphal ode over the Amorites here follows.

#### A SONG OF TRIUMPH OVER THE AMORITES, WHO HAD BEEN THE CONQUERORS OF MOAB.‡

Come ye into Heshbon,  
Build and strengthen Sihon.  
A fire went out of Heshbon,  
A flame from the city Sihon,  
Which consumed the mountains of Moab,  
The dwellers in the high places of Arnon.  
Woe unto thee, Moab,  
Thou art undone, people of Chemosh.  
Thy sons must be fugitives,  
Thy daughters become captives  
To Sihon, King of the Amorites.

\* Ex. xvii. 14.

† Num. xxi. 14.

‡ Num. xxi. 27.

**Their yoke is now broken  
From Heshbon unto Dibon.  
We laid waste unto Nophah,  
We laid them waste unto Medbah.**

The Israelites invite their guests into the conquered Heshbon, and Sihon. They boast that they have now conquered the conquerors of Moab, and celebrate with irony the deeds of their conquered enemies. Of such irony there was much in the ancient triumphal songs, which can have little interest for us.

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In the Book of Joshua we find nothing like the songs above introduced. A few bold features in the narrative, seem, however, to have come from triumphal songs, and in the boldest of them, the account of the sun and moon's standing still, reference is expressly made to the book of ancient heroic songs;\* and hence it is strange, that this beautiful passage should have been so long misinterpreted.

Joshua attacks the Amorites early in the morning, and continues the battle until into the night, making it, therefore, a long day, and the day seemed to be lengthened in order to the completion of the victory. The sun and moon, therefore, (for he pursued the enemy till into the night,) were witnesses of his deeds. They seemed to stand still with astonishment in the heavens, till the victory was completed. All nature appeared for once, subject to the command of the hero, and

\* The book may have been called Jasher from the kindred word signifying *song*, and if it was a book of Hebrew heroic poetry, it probably began with the song at the Red Sea, and from the first word in that, perhaps, acquired its name. Or Jasher was equivalent to the book of heroes, because it was the heroic designation of this people as Jeshurun, *αγαθοι*, as we have seen above. Both amount to the same thing, if we translate Jasher, the book of heroic songs. That it was such its contents show.



to obey his commanding voice. Jehovah himself seconded it, not only by sending a supernatural, i. e. panic fear upon the enemy, but, when they fled also, by pursuing them with a storm of hail, as if he were the leagued ally of Joshua. Similar representations from the history of the times were at the foundation of this. The narrative proceeds—

And as they fled before Israel,\*  
 The way that leadeth to Bethhoron,  
 Then cast Jehovah mighty stones  
 Upon them out of heaven,  
 Along the way unto Azekah, and they fell.  
 A greater number fell by the hail,  
 Than were slain by the sword of Israel.  
 Then Joshua spake unto Jehovah,  
 In the day, when Jehovah gave the Amorites,  
 To fall before the children of Israel,  
 He said before assembled Israel,  
 "Stand still, thou sun, upon Gibeon,  
 And thou moon in the valley of Ajalon.  
 Then the sun stood still,  
 And the moon was stayed,  
 Until the victory was completed,  
 The war of Israel upon their enemies."  
 For is it not written in the book of heroes,  
 "The sun stood still in the midst of heaven,  
 And went not down, although the day was ended.  
 And never was a day like that day,  
 Neither before it nor after it,  
 That Jehovah listened to the voice of a hero,  
 For Jehovah himself fought for Israel."

Who does not see, that here is the costume of poetry, even if no book of heroes were referred to? To the language of Israel such expressions were not foreign, nor was their boldness unusual. How often is it said in the plain style of history, "God fought for Israel." In the song of Deborah even

\* Josh. x. 11.

the stars become combatants. The sun and moon and eleven stars are represented in the dream of a youthful shepherd, as bowing down before him. The Sun has its place of rest, and knows the time of its retiring to repose.\*

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So it is with several passages in the Books of Joshua and Judges. When the walls of Jericho are described as falling down at the sound of the sacred trumpets, let the account be read in the spirit of that age, and it will cease to excite a smile. With the sound of the trumpets was united the war-cry, and the rush of warlike assault, and the one was only the signal for the other. For six days the commander had forbidden the assault, and on the seventh, when the enemy were put off their guard, by the idle loitering of the Israelites, and the walls at the early dawn were undefended, he gave the signal for the war-cry, that is, for storming the place, and thus they took possession of the city.

The whole Book of Judges is animated with the spirit of heroic poetry. It breathes the spirit of the age, the youthful vigour of a newly settled race of mountaineers, who indeed were often subdued and oppressed for want of organization and government among themselves, but whose heroism and love of liberty now and then kindled up in the heroick souls of individuals, and broke out into a flame. I might denomin-

\* It may be that Joshua had expressed the wish, that the day might be prolonged, (for do not Homer's heroes express wishes of the same sort, and do they not correspond with the spirit, that prevails in the heat of battle?) and when the event corresponded with his wishes, and the light continued unusually long, and the very heavens seemed to come to his aid by a storm of hail, what was more natural, than that the triumphal song should compose the picture of a day unlike to any other, should represent the hero as speaking, employing Jehovah himself as a coadjutor, and make the sun and moon participate in the triumph, and wonder at the boldness of the heroic leader.

ate this the poetical age of Israel, and will explain myself on the point more at large.

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A period of civil and political order, of peaceful security, and established moral customs, is certainly the happiest for a nation, but not the most favourable for producing poetry, that is filled with life and action. This delights rather in bold and striking incidents, in the prevalence of passion, of the marvellous, and of liberty. "At that period there was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes," and often, therefore, the most savage and cruel wrong, as we see from many traces of their history. He acted according to the impulse of ardent and unrestrained desire, and in relation to all heroic deeds it is said, "the spirit of the Lord, that is, the national spirit of the Israelites impelled him, or the national God aroused and armed him, the spirit of Jehovah began to drive him here and there," even when the actor was by no means a man of moral worth. It is painful to read the objections, that are multiplied against this book and its marvellous events without regard to the time and circumstances, in which it was written. Every one knows, that all ancient nations in their wars permitted themselves the use of artifice and deception; all rude nations do so at the present day, and, where in other respects magnanimity exists, prefer craft to force. A disorganized and oppressed people, whose national power exists only in individual enterprize, have more especial need of such weapons. For how can an individual even the strongest and bravest, if we mean to speak rationally, maintain himself against a multitude, if he does not gain an advantage by the arts of war? And what are these arts, but skilful artifices? Or is there a less ingenious artifice, a less heroic heroism, than that which breathes from the mouth of the cannon? Let Ehud go, then, excited by Jehovah, and

with his dagger pierce the foreign tyrants of his country. It was more decisive than a victory with us, which is purchased by the blood of thousands. Every thing then depended on individual heroism and prowess. The rude dweller in tents, Jael the wife of Eber, who, uniting with her people, pierced through the commander of a foreign foe in her tent, could make, indeed, but little claim to rank in our orders of military merit, yet deserved, according to the spirit of the age, the national praise awarded her in the song of Deborah. We must first convert the hordes, which made war upon Israel to well ordered nations, and their times into ours, if we would apply our principles of right in war to them.

Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem,  
Cui rex deorum regnum in aves vagas,  
Permisit, expertus fidelem  
Jupiter in Ganymede flavo,

Olim juvenas et patrius vigor  
Nido laborum propulit inscium;  
Vernique jam nimbis remotis  
Insolitos docuere nisus

Venti paventem; mox in ovilia  
Demisit hostem vividus impetus  
Nunc in reluctantes dracones  
Egit amor dapis atque pugne.—

Thus do I picture to myself the deeds of Deborah, of Gideon, of Jephthah, and of Samson, and I hold no more prolonged vindication of particular circumstances on the grounds of morals and natural rights to be necessary. The whole stands forth, even in respect to the tone of the narrative, in the light and costume of poetry. Some of the narratives, indeed, as the capturing of Samson in the lap of Delilah, are arranged with poetical symmetry. Individual expressions have a remarkable force, the language of the heroes is full of the spirit of Jehovah, i. e. of enthusiasm, resolution

and boldness. The annunciation of some of them before their birth, the appearance of an *angel*, or a *nameless Prophet*, the singular proofs, whether of the calling or of the courage of these men, the riddles, the play upon words, the youthful rashness for example of all the enterprises of Samson—all this gives to these narratives more poetry, than many heroic poems have been able to exhibit with all the marvels of their fabulous machinery. Each of these heroes too is so characteristic, so like himself, in the slightest features of his history, that in the brief space of one or two chapters allotted to it he stands forth a living hero.\*

\*I will endeavour to show this by a few particulars in the history of Samson. Good humour, levity and arrogance pervade his whole life. Wine and strong drink are forbidden him, but he yields himself the more devotedly to love, which more than once led him into a snare, and at length deprived him of his prowess, his liberty, and his eyes. "I will seek a wife among my enemies that I may find occasion against them" was a foolish thought, and yet how entirely in the spirit of a headlong youth, who, conscious of his superior power, knows not how to direct it, and divides his heart between love and bold adventure. The riddle at his marriage feast, and its consequences, show the same characteristic. In opposing men he was a man, in opposing women he was but a woman, as many similar heroes in history have been. He answers with levity those, who through his own means had solved his riddle, goes forth and slays thirty Philistines, that his thirty marriage guests might receive their prize, deserts his wife, and returns with a kid for a present, and as if nothing had happened, goes directly to her chamber. When he learns, that she has become the wife of another, he says "now at length I shall have just cause against the Philistines, I will do them mischief," as if he had been waiting for such an occasion. The story of the three hundred foxes with the firebrands between their tails is entirely after his manner; and the objections, that have been made to it are not worthy of reputation. The foxes or rather jackals of that country enter into houses, are easily taken, and an idle, frolicsome adventure like this would not fail to engage merry accomplices enough to carry it into effect. They had the sport. He looked to the result. So also with the gate of Gaza, which to the reproach of the Gazites he drew off to the mountain. So with the jaw-bone of the ass, the pun upon which was strictly in character for Samson. The place where he

To this poetical age belongs also the finest heroic song of the Hebrews, the song of Deborah. The 68th Psalm will approach nearest to it, but is still far behind. In the song of

made the attack was called Lechi, jawbone, and as clearly appears from chap. xv. 13. 14. 19. this was a narrow pass, a sort of hollow shaped probably like a jaw-bone. He had made an arrangement with his countrymen, that when they had fulfilled the part which their cowardice led them to take, of binding and delivering him to his enemies, they should remain quiet, since they could not have been excited to any thing more. And when in passing he came into this winding and narrow pass, to Lechi, he chose his opportunity, seized upon the jaw-bone of an ass, which lay there, and accomplished his work. He then congratulated himself respecting it in a double play upon words, to which still another is added, that God showed to the fainting warrior, who after his bold adventure longed for a cool draught of water, a fountain in the same winding rock, Lechi, where the battle was fought. The fountain, as the narrator tells us, is called to this day the caller's fountain or the fountain of invocation. (Here too the fountain could not have flowed from the jaw-bone, which he wielded in his hand, but from something that remained to aftertimes, obviously the winding rock, Lechi, v. 14.) All this is told with an animated brevity, which shows the genius of Samson. The same is true of the sad history of his reposing in the lap of Delilah. His two great weaknesses, love and levity, deprived him of his secret. For he knew nothing more, than that he was dedicated to his national God, whose strength would remain so long as he kept his inviolable vow. This he knew from his name, his education and mode of life, which might perhaps be sufficiently self-denying. Suddenly he lost his courage, when his vow was broken and felt that the assistance of God was withdrawn from him. But as his hair grew he found his cheerfulness and courage revive. His enemies knew this, and when he was to furnish them with amusement, probably in an old, widely extended, and lightly built house of idol worship, he amused himself by trying his renewed youthful energies upon the pillars of the house, thus seeking a joyful death. He died as he had lived, an irreconcilable enemy of the Philistines, and rejoiced in uniting their death with his own. I will not ask, whether a narrative so characteristic, and self-consistent, could have been the work of fiction? I only say, that it is strikingly correspondent to the age, and beautifully told. Precisely that, which is most the object of sarcasm, or most absurdly defended, is the finest. And so generally with the narratives of the book of Judges.

Deborah all is present, living action. In that of David an ancient heroic narrative is to become the embellishment of a solemn state ceremony which still remains only a ceremonial procession. Forgive me, thou heroine, beneath thy native palms, that I mingle in the dance of thy nation's jubilee, and in feeble tones re-echo thy triumphal song.

### TRIUMPHAL SONG OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.\*

Then sang Deborah, and Barak, Abinoam's son,  
On the day of their triumph they sang.

Give ye praise to the Lord,  
That Israel hath taken her revenge,  
That the people came freely to battle.

Here ye kings, give ear ye princes,  
I will sing, I will sing unto Jehovah.  
I will sing unto Jehovah, God of Israel.

Jehovah, when thou wentest out from Seir,†  
And marchedst from the hills of Edom,  
Then the earth quaked, the heavens dropped,  
The clouds poured streams of water,  
The mountains melted before Jehovah,  
Sinai before Jehovah God of Israel.

In the days of Shamgar son of Anath,  
In the days of Joel the highways were empty,  
And travellers sought the winding paths.  
The assemblies of Israel were no more,  
They ceased, until I Deborah arose,

\* I have translated this song in *den Briefen das Studium der Theologie betreffend Th. 1. S. 111.* and accompanied it with remarks which I will not now repeat. Later investigations have given me new views on some passages, but I must refer to those remarks with reference to the connexion of thought in the piece. Whether there was a chorus to it will soon appear.

† The song begins with the figure, which Moses used, Deut. xxxiii. 2. and with which David began the 68th psalm, and Habakkuk, cap. 3. It seems to have been a customary beginning of Hebrew songs of triumph, because they all follow Moses as their Homer.

Till I arose the mother of Israel.

They had chosen them new Gods,\*

Then war was raging at the gates,

And no shield or spear was seen†

Among the forty thousands of Israel.

My heart turns to you, ye leaders of Israel,

And to you ye volunteers among the people,

Sing praises with me to Jehovah.‡

Ye that ride on asses richly harnessed,||

That sit on costly coverings,

And who walk on foot in the streets,

Meditate and utter a song.

An ode for the herdsmen§ to sing—

Who water their herds among the wells,

That there they may praise the goodness of Jehovah,

\*The whole Book of Judges proceeds on this idea, and to this cause, in strict accordance with the law of Moses, ascribes the ruin of the country. The principal incidents of the book are however equally original with this song itself.

†Not that there was no shield or spear in Israel, but there was no one who called them forth, and summoned the forty thousand brave Israelites to the war.

‡Those who led, and those who voluntarily followed, are all to unite in praise; they all partake in the victory, and the song of triumph. There is a refinement in the beginning and the transitions of the ode hardly to be expected in that age.

|| Persons of distinction. Those who sit on costly apparel, judges or princes, and those who walk the streets, common people. All enjoy the fruits of victory, public security and freedom.

§ The interpretation of this difficult verse commends itself, I think, by its facility, and the connexion of the whole. The battle occurred among the rivers and torrents of Mount Tabor, (compare v. 21. and chap. iv. 6. 7.) and here, therefore, the victory is forever to be celebrated. The battle was fought in the rainy season, when the fountains and rivulets were swollen, and according to v. 21. swept away the Canaanites. On this account Deborah begins with the dropping heavens, introduces the constellations, which bring rain as combatants. In like manner are the narrow passes of Tabor conceived, in which the people were placed, and thus the scene of battle is accurately defined.



His goodness to the people of Israel,\*  
 For there the people of Jehovah were in straits.  
 Arouse thee! arouse thee, Deborah! †  
 Awake! awake! give a song of triumph,  
 Arise Barak, bring forth thy captives,  
 Thou son of Abinoam.  
 Then went a remnant against the strong,  
 Jehovah with me against the mighty.  
 From Ephraim came the first to Amalek,  
 Then camest thou Benjamin with thy people,  
 From Machir came over the leaders,  
 From Zebulon those that muster for battle.‡  
 The princes of Issachar were with Deborah,  
 Issachar, in bravery like Barak,§  
 Sprang forth into the valley.¶  
 By Reuben's brooks was much consulting.¶  
 Why sittest thou there among the stalls?  
 To hear the bleating of the herds?

\* The heroine, an inhabitant of the country, is particularly concerned, that the people of the country should never forget the victory and deliverance of Israel. By this circumstance, perhaps it was preserved.

† Properly, "rouse up! rouse up! excite thyself, that you may leave a picture of the whole exhibition, which v. 11—15, proceeds in the order of battle. Her admonition to Barak (chap. iv. 6. 14.) is the beginning, and then follows the order of march, as the tribes assemble and follow her. She was from the mountains of Ephraim, (iv. 5.) and there also, was the primary source of the army, and of the victory. Perhaps the mountain, on which she dwelt, was called Amalek, as many mountains still retained their names from more ancient times.

‡ Those that bore the rod for mustering, plainly representing, that the most noble and ancient of the tribe, who gave command to others, followed her in the enterprise.

§ It is a special honour to this tribe to be compared with the leader, as equal in bravery. Tabor lay between Zebulon and Issachar.

¶ This is explained from chap. iv. 6. 12. 14. 15. They held themselves on the broad plain of Tabor.

¶ Here begins the sarcasm upon the tribes, which remained behind to v. 17.

By Reuben's Brooks is great consulting.

Gilead beyond Jordan stayed unmoved,  
 Dan also, or why should he dwell in ships,  
 Asher was safe by the shore of the sea,  
 And lingered by his bays and creeks.  
 Only Zebulon jeoparded their lives,  
 And Naphtali on the mountain heights.\*  
 But the kings they came and fought,†  
 There fought the kings of Canaan,  
 At Tanach by the waters of Megiddo,  
 But money, their desire, they received not.

From heaven they fought (against them),  
 The stars from their courses fought with Sisera.  
 The river Kishon swept them away,  
 The winding river, the river Kishon.  
 March on my soul in thy might.‡

Then stamped the hoofs of the horses,  
 In the fleeing, in the fleeing of heroes.  
 Curse Meroz, said the angel of Jehovah,||  
 Utter curses upon the inhabitants thereof,  
 They came not to the help of Jehovah,  
 To the help of Jehovah in his host of heroes.

Blessed above women be Jael,  
 The wife of Heber the Kenite,  
 Blessed above the dwellers in tents.

\* They were the first, whom Deborah committed to Barak, (iv. 6.) and in whose heroism she confided, and who are here also honoured with the last and highest praise. They with the Northern tribes of Judæa were heroic mountaineers. Zebulon it seems is contrasted with Asher and Dan, because like them it was by the sea, and yet joined the expedition.

† In every word of this description there is sarcastic raillery. She honours them with titles, that she may annul them; and this tone continues in what is said of the mother of Sisera and her women.

‡ She excites herself to proceed with the same animation through the rest of the song.

|| In the whole book of Judges the voice of God is called the *angel of Jehovah*. (Chap. ii. 1—4. vi. 12—22. xiii. 3—21.) The denomination here is probably from the first of the passages, for the angel of the Lord, which appeared there, commanded to conquer the land. The song speaks in the name of God, i. e. as the voice of the nation,

He asked water, she gave him milk,\*  
 She brought curdled milk in a lordly dish.—  
 She seized with her hand upon the nail,  
 With her right hand the heavy hammer.

And with the hammer she smote Sisera,  
 She smote him through the head,  
 She pierced and struck through his temples,  
 Under her feet he bowed himself,  
 He fell, he lay down,  
 At her feet he bowed, he fell.  
 Where he bowed, there he fell down—dead.

The mother of Sisera looked from a window.†  
 She cried through the lattice,  
 "Why are his chariots so long in coming?  
 Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?"

Her wise ladies answered her,  
 Yea, she quickly returned answer to herself.  
 "Are they not then to find and divide the spoil,  
 To every man a damsel or two,  
 And variegated garments for Sisera,‡  
 A prey of bright embroidered garments,  
 Doubly embroidered, variegated clothing,  
 The triumphal procession of the spoil.

So let all thine enemies perish, O Jehovah,  
 But let them, that love thee, be as the sun,  
 When he goeth forth in his glory.||

\* This, too, is irony and imitative representation to the last breath of the smitten Sisera. The picture is beautifully poetical, and characterizes the age in a lively manner. That it was intoxicating milk, is plain from a multitude of Oriental books of travels. He concealed himself in the interior gynacæum of the tent, and there in profound sleep found his death.

† The contrasts of the picture render the irony perfect,

‡ This wise lady of the harem was not desirous, that Sisera should acquire any damsels. She wished only for variegated garments and showy trappings for the triumphal procession of her lord.

|| This short sentence is, as it were, a seal of the whole song, and shows that it is as methodically arranged, as it is consistent with the age and suited to the people and the place.

## MUSICK AND DANCING UNITED IN THE COMPOSITION OF NATIONAL SONGS.

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### AN APPENDIX TO THE SONG OF DEBORAH.

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Brown, an English writer, has hazarded the hypothesis,\* that poetry, music, and dancing never have a more powerful influence, than when united, that among all nations in a state of nature they have been and are still combined together, and on this account have such power over them. Had he satisfied himself with facts, and not extended his theory to times and objects, where it does not apply, especially had he left lawgivers out of the question, and not sought to explain by it every thing in all species of poetry, I know of no objection to his views. The union of these arts among all rude nations is pretty clearly proved; even among the Greeks, the drama arose out of the chorus, or a poetical effusion accompanied with musick and dancing. That in their earliest forms, and within a limited extent of cultivation, they are all three naturally combined together, cannot be denied, for some poetry at least is lifeless without tones to accompany it, and the most simple and natural musick has no animating effect without poetry. Such musick alone gives only a series of obscure, undefined emotions, which require to be rendered clear and distinct by words, or they at length, unless listened to with the

\* Brown's Dissertation on the rise, union and power, the progression, separation and corruption of poetry and musick. London, 1763.

ear of a mere artist, render the hearer weary, sleepy and sad. That both these arts naturally lead to the dance we see by their effect on all children. Musick and dancing; animated feelings uttered in words, require gesture to give the expression its highest effect. Thus there is truth in the language of Milton.

Blest pair of Syrens, pledges of Heaven's joy,  
Sphere-born, harmonious sisters, voice and verse,  
Wed your Divine sounds, and mix'd power employ,  
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee.

In the constitution of nature our several senses are united and act upon one soul, why must they be severed in respect to the outward objects of gratification? Why should not the inward eye, which contemplates the visions of heaven, be accompanied and confirmed by the inward ear, which listens to its harmonies? And why should not both, in order to their most animated expression, employ gestures to illustrate the imagery, and the dance to measure the musical rhythm? In poetry as well as musick rhythm is but the movement of the dance. The images of the former, express the living forms and shapes of universal nature by their likenesses reflected in the countenance and soul of man. Thus the three arts are so interdependent and mutually involved, that even a philosophical distinction of the several conceptions is not possible, without including each within the spheres of the others.

If this, then, cannot be denied, there must be a point of union somewhere, which, if skilfully attained, would necessarily give to them their greatest power. It must act, that is, at the same time upon all the powers of sense, and either insinuate itself into the soul, or take it by force through all its organs. It reaches that sensorium commune, in which slumber the images, tones, sensibilities, and emotion of the soul, and excites it as with celestial harmonies.

**This view of the matter, however, shows of itself, that such a point of union is of rare and delicate attainment. Not all the images of poetry express themselves by gestures, nor do all the tones of musick awaken the dance of emotions. If what is peculiar to one of the three arts greatly predominates, the others in the same degree lose their influence, and the harmonic proportion, that becomes beautiful only by such an illusive correspondence of all, as to produce a perfect unity of effect, may well be considered a prodigy ; and it was perhaps best, that each art should follow its own independent course. This they, in fact, did at the moment when each became a separate and distinct art. What each lost by being severed from its companions, it must now make up by embellishments of its own, and studied, therefore, its own peculiar character; unfolded it to the utmost, and now wrought its effects by relying upon its own power, while before this it had necessarily modified its agency from regard to its union with other agencies not essentially belonging to it. It is, therefore, manifest, that each of these arts, as an art, in its objective existence, gained by the separation, though it is alike undeniable, that subjectively, as an organ of nature in the soul, the power of each was diminished.**

It would seem, moreover, that there are only certain periods, when these arts could be united in their due proportions. It could be only when no one of them is yet become a distinct, peculiar, and refined art ; when poetry has not yet built its airy castles, where neither dance nor song can follow it, nor musick become so artificial, that it would require the voice of birds to accompany its tones and movements with verbal signs; when too, the dance is not so much a labyrinth of art, as a natural utterance of the passions and agencies of the soul guided by musick, as the animated expressive language of gesture. But suppose the separation once made, and each art to have advanced for centuries upon its own solitary course, while the human organs in the mean time have been cultivated

and refined, and their reunion becomes difficult, or rather at once impossible. Place before our eyes the artificial dance of a sensuous people, even the Grecian dithyrambus itself, and our ear is unaccustomed to combine what is so manifold into one momentary impression. We distinguish and trace each several art by itself, and judge it by itself. We fail of that united impresssion, of that rapid association of ideas, of sensuous impulses and upspringing emotions, in which alone their power of enchantment lies.

This period, in which such a union may exist, falls, therefore, in nations, whose feelings are yet fresh and lively, whose life is marked by few but strong impulses of emotion, and who from their infancy have been accustomed to enjoy many combined together. Among nations, whose poetry continues to be the expression of truth within the narrow sphere of their own experience, of their family, their country, the deeds of their ancestors, the wishes and actions of their own exclusive mode of life, and who have been accustomed from childhood to combine these simple objects with all the truth of expression in their natural gestures, with the favourite gratifications of the ear, and the movements of their simple melodies; among nations, whose musick was, therefore, at an early period adapted to the choral song, and ventured but little beyond the sphere of this, finally, whose gestures are determined, not by the rules of a science, but by a healthful state of the passions, and conventional principles of intelligibility, among such nations and such only is found a theatre, in which these magic sisters celebrate their choral harmonies. So soon as the nation advances in its cultivation, the beautiful phantom, which their enchantment had raised, vanishes of its own accord.

The Hebrews, like all nations which have a taste for musick and poetry, had such a period in the progress of their cultivation, but necessarily before it had reached its highest point. In the song at the Red Sea there is no determinate number of syllables, but the words are peculiarly sounding, accompa-

nied with choral song, and here and there with mimic representation. The adufa was the musical instrument of the dancing women, and the obscure monosyllabic words employed as terminations are probably the echo of the men ; for in this way we see children begin the cultivation of a taste for song. They fall in with the emphatic tone, with the last word of the line, even when they are yet too infantile to pronounce it. The times of the Judges were, perhaps, the proper period for the perfect combination of these simple arts, and the song of Deborah seems to be the most striking example, which their poetry furnishes. Instead of Pindaric strophes, there are three leading divisions sufficiently marked in it ;—the introduction, probably interrupted by the frequent responsive shouts of the people, v. 1—11.—the picture of the battle, the naming of the tribes with commendation or sarcastic irony, here and there accompanied with mimicry in the expression, 12—27.—and finally, the derision cast upon the triumph of Sisera, also imitative, until the last verse, probably as a general chorus, closes the whole. As all rude nations in their triumphal feasts celebrate the principal events in imitative songs, so here we find undoubtedly, traces of the same thing.

On this ground we might account for the influence of poetry at this period, without supposing it to include any great degree of art. It was a representation in song of living deeds, a highly impassioned imitative poetry. It was by means of such, that the Prophets wrought upon Saul, and David also with his breathing harp. In our own times examples of this sort are rare, but not impossible. There is scarcely any man of sensibility, on whom some strains of musick, the favourite songs of his childhood and youth, do not exert a marvellous influence even in old age. In times of sorrow and sickness their effect is more vivid, often uncontrollable. How many singular phænomena of this sort might be adduced ! When skillful musicians study the favourite tones and musical strains of individuals, and afterwards apply them to those individuals



with their highest influence, it is known what striking effects they can produce upon them. In nations unsophisticated by refinement such tones are given by national songs, which, with certain favourite objects of national pride and ancestral glory, gain a power over the heart and head of every individual from childhood, and when afterwards these tones recur in connexion with such objects and on solemn occasions, they renew as it were the youth of every one, and reproduce the glow of their earliest enthusiasm. Every one knows what a magic effect the mere coming together, still more the harmony of sentiment of a great multitude produces. Not merely that community of outward circumstances excites a common feeling and hurries the soul, which feels itself but as a drop in the current, along with it, the general enthusiasm of kindred ideas seizes upon them, and the result is that pleasing delirium, at which the man of the world scoffs, and which the cool philosopher equally fails to explain.

If we look at the incidents of these early periods of Hebrew history, what themes do most of them furnish for the simplest poetical effusions, combined with the most natural musick, in short for the pictures of lyric poetry! Look at *the daughter of Jephthah*, as she goes to her death with a chorus of maidens lamenting around her! She goes as an offering to the altar, as a bride to the shadows of death. She bewails her youth, takes a farewell of all that was dear to her in life, and prophesies perhaps upon the altar—what a touching picture, in its language, tones, and gestures! Again take *David in the presence of Saul*. More than one poet has availed himself of the beauty of this situation; but no one to my knowledge has yet stolen the harp of David, and produced a poem, such even as Dryden's ode in the composition of Handel, where Timotheus plays before Alexander. *Samson* has furnished the tuneful Milton with a subject for a very musical drama, and the *Israelites* in the desert is known to us all. *The sword of Ehud* might be wrought into a poem, as good at

least as that, which was sung at the Panathenæa in Greece; for the subject is the same. Harmodius and Aristogeiton carried their swords covered, when they slew the tyrant Hipparchus and restored Athens to freedom. The song in which the deed was celebrated, is yet extant, and their memory lives in the accents of fame. It is a matter of regret that we Germans in celebrating these wonderful events of antiquity have adopted only the form of the epopee, which for most subjects becomes a powerless tale. Other nations have raised them to the character of lyric expression, where they are more brief, more impressive, and more affecting. The opinions also of the age in question abound in materials for poetry. Whoever has read the summoning of the ghost of Darius in the *Persæ* of *Æschylus*, where the deceased king appears in the midst of the choral song, that he may prophecy concerning the destiny of his unhappy kingdom, will have his mind, in reading of Saul's questioning the dead at Endor, otherwise occupied than in speculating about the deception practised by the sorceress. The shade of the Prophet ascending from the realms of the dead prophesies, as Darius did, respecting the fate of the desolated kingdom, and the near approach of the death of Saul and his sons. Why should not the numerous Patriarchs, who uttered prophecies in their dying moments, remind us of Hector, of Patroclus, of Cassandra, whom *Æschylus* and *Homer* have represented as prophesying in the last moments of life? Finally the friendship of Jonathan, the early incidents in the life of David—what pictures for the susceptible feelings of the poet and musician! In short the blooming youth of the Hebrew muse falls within this period of the national history. The wonders of the desert were so far withdrawn, as no longer to overpower, but still to elevate and delight the imagination. They had not yet become lifeless marvels, as they did in later times. It was the precise period, when they were fitted to awaken national inspiration, for every hero was seized by the spirit of Jehovah. This name, and

the ancient miracles, whose fruits they were enjoying, diffused unity and interest over many deeds not otherwise exciting. If all histories could be related to children in the style of the books of Judges and Samuel, they would learn them all as the animated pictures of poetry.

Note. I have omitted here a dialogue of four or five pages respecting the history of Samson, which the editor inserted from the author's manuscripts. The views presented in it are with very trifling additions the same with those found in the note p. 185. Even the additional illustrations occur again in the following section.

Tr.

## VIII.

### ADDITIONAL FRAGMENTS

FROM THE YOUTHFUL PERIOD OF HEBREW POETRY.

Jotham's fable. Of the spirit of Oriental fable generally. Samson's riddle, with that of Agur. Fondness of children and of nations in an early period of cultivation for this kind of fiction. Samson's play upon words. Of verbal conceits among the Hebrews generally. Causes of the frequent occurrence of these among this people and in their language. Of the purpose and value of such, as a gratification to the ear, or an aid to the memory. Fondness of the Hebrews for clothing new ideas in old and consecrated terms. Whether the time of the Judges was a period of happiness. Song of Hannah. Annunciation of a change of times. Merit of Samuel. Schools of the Prophets. What they were. Effect of their singing upon Saul. Friendship of David and Jonathan. Lamentation of David over Jonathan.

To the poetical age of Israel's liberty belongs also the beautiful fable of Jotham. Like the fables of Æsop and Menenius Agrippa, it was spoken to the people for their instruction respecting an actual event, and such is the truest and best origin and aim of fabulous compositions. In this fable trees speak and act, for Israel then lived beneath the trees the life of herdsmen or cultivators of the soil. The youngest son of a worthy father, who alone was left after the murder of all his brothers, goes upon the top of the mountain, raises his voice, and addresses in the following language the people, who had made the oppressor of his family and the murderer of all his brothers their chosen king.

Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem,  
That God may hearken unto you.

The trees went forth upon a time  
To anoint a king to rule them.

They said unto the olive tree,  
 "Be thou the king over us."  
 But the olive tree said to them,  
 "Shall I give up my oily sap,  
 For which both God and man respect me,  
 And go to wave above the trees?"

Then the trees said to the fig-tree,  
 "Come thou and be our king."  
 But the fig-tree answered them,  
 "Shall I give up my sweetness,  
 And my rich annual fruits,  
 And go to wave above the trees?"

Then said the trees unto the vine,  
 "Come thou and be our king."  
 The vine made answer to them,  
 "Shall I forsake my wine,  
 Which cheereth God and man,  
 And go to wave above the trees?"

Then said all the trees unto the bramble,  
 "Come thou and be our king."  
 The bramble said unto the trees,  
 "If in truth ye annoint me over you,  
 Come and put your trust in my shadow.  
 But if it be not so,  
 Let fire come out of the bramble,  
 And devour the cedars of Lebanon!"

The fable, as a species of composition, lives wholly in the wild period of uncontrolled liberty. In the spirit and feeling of such freedom it represents the quiet happiness of the several fruitful and luxuriant trees, none of which are desirous of the proposed elevation. It clearly exhibits the gifts and qualifications, by which the bramble attains the royal dignity, and of which on the first proposal it is conscious in itself. It shows the inward and essential character of the kingly office, as cold and barren, without oil and joyless, to wave above the blooming trees. Finally it relates the first gracious acts of the bramble, the conditions offered to the cedars of Lebanon, either to come and place themselves under the shadow of the

bramble, or be consumed by it with fire. Beautiful fable! full of sad truth for more than one age!

The East is full of such ethico-political fables. What the historians of European nations propose in aphorisms, the Orientals clothe in the dress of fiction or fable. The tyrant, who took from them their freedom of speech, must at least leave them their fables, their proverbs, their wild and romantic tales. These not only commended themselves to the minds of the common people, but sometimes ventured in humble guise to approach the ear of the monarch. Thus Nathan related to David, the king after God's own heart, a little story of the one ewe lamb of the poor man.\* Thus too, Isaiah sung to his well beloved, the people, a fabulous song of another beloved, the sentiment of which is simply that the former is an unfruitful and unprofitable vineyard, which the latter, the Lord of the vineyard threatens with immediate destruction. The Prophets paint symbols upon the wall, or themselves become symbols, living fables, and when curiosity prompted the enquiry, what is this? what does this witless figure mean? the Prophet explained its pregnant import. Often, too, this is given dressed in verbal conceits.

What seest thou Jeremiah?

"A rod of an almond tree."

Thou sawest truly!

For I will watch over my word

Till I accomplish it,

where the words in the original exhibit a paronomasia.

What play of words, too, in regard to proper names, monuments, and historical events, do we find abounding in the historical and poetical writings of the Hebrews.—And as the riddles and puns of Samson belong here, it may, perhaps, be the most fitting occasion to illustrate more at large both these topics, which are so great favourites in Oriental poetry.

When Samson celebrated his marriage festival, he knew of no better way to entertain his guests than by a riddle, which he propounded in verse.\*

Samson.

I will put forth now a riddle to you,  
And ye shall interpret it.

Answer.

Put forth thy riddle then,  
That we may hear it.

Samson.

Out of the eater came forth meat,  
Out of the strong came forth sweetness.

Answer.

Nothing is sweeter than honey,  
Nothing is stronger than a lion.

Samson.

If ye had not ploughed with my heifer,  
Ye had not found out my riddle.

All these sentences in the original are in parallelism, or in a word, rhymes. The question is formally proposed, and formally answered. Seven days were given them for reflection, and a liberal reward offered for the solution; clear proofs of the value set upon such trials of wit in these times.

We find this respect and fondness for riddles even in later books. The queen of Sheba came to test the wisdom of Solomon by trials of the same kind; and the last chapter but one of his proverbs contains little else but riddles,† though, indeed, in a different and higher style.

#### THE WORDS OF AGUR THE SON OF JAKEH.

In lofty phrase the man to Itheil spake,  
To Itheil and Uchal spake he thus.  
More brutish surely am I than a man.  
What men call prudence I have not.

\* Jud. xiv. 12—18.

† Prov. xxx.

I have not learned their wisdom,  
 And should I know the knowledge of the Holy ?  
 Who up to heaven ascended or came down ?  
 Who gathered up the wind within his fist ?  
 Who bound the waters in a garment ?  
 Who gave the earth its several bounds ?  
 What is his name ? and what his son's ?  
 Inform me, if thou knowest ?

I have already ventured, and I fear without success, an explanation of this enigmatical passage.\* It is, perhaps, more simple, than one is apt at first to suppose, and the reason we fail to discover the meaning, is in fact, that we look too deep for it. The sage Agur is to discourse lofty sentiments to his pupils, but he begins with modesty, that too exalted wisdom may not be expected from him. How shall he, who in understanding and knowledge is inferior to his race, and confesses, that he is not versed in human wisdom, be supposed to possess that knowledge, which belongs to those, who are entrusted with the truth of God, to the holy ones. The wisdom of men is obviously placed in contrast here with a higher science; and the holy, therefore, are such as may boast of a higher light, and admission to the Divine counsels, as he himself at the same time explains by his questions. The true sage must have ascended to heaven and returned thence, he must know the depths of creation, and understand the whole compass of the world, or he deserves not the name.† “And what,” asks Agur, “is the name of the man, who can venture to say this of himself? Where does he live, and who are the disciples whom he hath taught. Tell me his name?” In other words, none such is found on earth.—Obviously this commencement is but an echo of what is said of wisdom in Job, where in the same language, and on the same grounds, it is

\* Briefe das Studium der Theologie betreffend. Th. 1. S. 184.

† That this is the ideal of wisdom among the Orientals, we see from Gen. iii. 5. Job. xxviii. Prov. iii. 8. 20. viii. 22—31.



said, that God alone is wise, because he alone knows the whole broad creation, hath weighed the winds, and marked the boundaries of the earth. To man belongs only a different wisdom, and it is precisely that, which Agur gives. He proceeds on.

What God enjoins is wisdom pure as gold,  
He is a shield to them, who trust in him.  
Add nothing to the words of God,  
Lest he reprove, and thou be found a liar.

The same sentiment, which Job also expresses, that "the fear of God is for man the only divine wisdom."—In the introduction of Agur, therefore, there is nothing enigmatical. Some of his other sayings are more nearly so.

#### TWO WISHES WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN LIFE.

But two things only have I asked of thee,  
Deny me not, so long as I shall live.  
Put far from me idolatry and lying,  
Allot me neither poverty nor riches,  
But give me food in just allowance,  
Lest I, too full, become a liar,  
And say, who is Jehovah?  
Or lest, too poor, I steal,  
And take the name of God in vain.

How beautifully are the two objects here related to each other in life! how true and convincing the mode of presenting them!

#### THE EVIL RACE.

There is a race, who curse their father,  
And bring no blessings on their mother,  
A race, in their own eyes forever pure,  
But yet not washed from their own filth.  
A race, whose eyes are carried loftily,  
And eyelids lifted up with pride.  
A race, whose teeth like daggers,

And forward teeth, like knives  
Devour the poor from off the land,  
The needy from among mankind.

The two last lines contain the solution of the riddle, whether spoken by the poet, or added by another.

#### THE INSATIABLE, A RIDDLE.

Two daughters hath the Halukah,  
That cry "bring hither, bring hither."  
Three things are never satisfied,  
And four say not "it is enough."  
The realm of death,  
The womb, that never bears,  
The earth, insatiate with water,  
And fire, that never saith, "enough."

The Halukah is the Parcae of Oriental fable, probably the mother of the realm of death, and the abyss, which according to Prov. xxvii. 20. are never satiated.\* It is here placed as an introduction, and by way of comparison with the four things, which like it are never satisfied. In the passage above referred to, the eyes of men are also included.

Hell and the abyss are never full,  
The eyes of men are never satisfied.

#### FOUR HIDDEN THINGS.

Three things are too mysterious for me,  
And four I cannot comprehend.  
The way of an eagle in the clouds,  
The way of a serpent on the rocks,  
The way of a ship amid the waves,  
The way of a man with a maiden.

\* In several poetical passages they are placed together as personified beings, as Prov. xv. 11. Job, xxvi. 6. xxviii. 22. Respecting the Halukah as the fate of the Orientals. See Bochart. Hierozoicon, T. 2. p. 800.

The three first are very probably used only to introduce the last. It is the manner of the Oriental enigma, thus to prepare the way for a sentiment. But since the fourth has an ambiguity in the translation, which does not belong to the Hebrew, I will add here a kindred passage,\* which will remove the ambiguity.

As thou knowest not the way of the wind,  
Nor how the bones are formed within the womb,  
Even so thou knowest not the works of God,  
Which he performeth.

The manner, in which man is formed in the womb, was to the Orientals the most unsearchable mystery, the most insolvable enigma, and is it not so among natural philosophers to the present hour? To this, then, the proposition was directed with its far-sought comparisons. It was probably another hand, which added to these four unsearchable things still a fifth.

Such also is the way of an adulteress,  
She eateth, and then wipeth her mouth,  
And saith, "I've done no wrong."

We see here the humourous conceit of arranging together things very different, which yet come under some one general conception. The more diverse they are, according to the taste of the Orientals, the more acuteness do they show, and are, therefore, so much the better. Especially were they fond of tracing analogies between the kingdom of nature and human customs.

#### THINGS OPPRESSIVE AND INTOLERABLE,

Three things are ever to the earth oppressive,  
And four are found intolerable to it.  
The slave, when he becomes a king,  
The fool, when filled with meat,  
An odious woman, when she's married.  
The maid, who is her mistress's heir.

\* Eccles. xi. 5,

## FOUR SMALL, BUT VERY ACTIVE THINGS.

Four things are little on the earth,  
But wiser than the wisest.

The ant race are a people without strength,  
Yet they prepare their meat in summer,  
The conies are a feeble race,  
Yet built their houses in the rocks,  
The locusts have no king to rule them,  
Yet all of them go forth by bands,  
The lizard; one may seize it with his hand,  
And yet it dwells in royal palaces.

The whole comparison was perhaps made on account of the last, when an animal of that sort, (which in warm climates live in the walls, and are very annoying,) made its appearance; for the Orientals are fond of such conceits, and involved propositions, especially in company; as they often indeed assembled for the purpose of enjoying them.

## THINGS STATELY IN THEIR MOTION.

Three things are stately in their going,  
Yea, four, move with comeliness.

A lion, the heroic king of brutes,  
That turns not before his enemy,  
A cock, that proudly treads his dunghill,\*  
A ram, that moves before his flock,  
A king, when marching with his people.

But enough on the subject of these conceits. We see what is their aim; to seize upon the resemblances of things, and unite them under a moral or artificial point of view. All nations in the early stages of their cultivation are fond of enigmatical conceits, as children are also upon the same grounds. Their wit and acuteness of discrimination, their powers of ob-

\* The second and third I have supplied from the ancient versions, for in the Hebrew text the subject of the second and predicate of the third are wanting.

ervation and invention, are exerted in this way respecting particular objects, with the greatest facility, and the praise, which the inventor as well as the interpreter of a good riddle receives for it in his own circle, is to them as it were the prize of battle, the harmless crown of victory. I could wish, that we possessed from the corresponding period, the sensuous age, of more nations instead of descriptions of their spirit, the actual proofs and examples of their childlike wit, of their acuteness exercising itself in proverbs, verbal conceits, and riddles; for with these we should have the peculiar current of their minds, the indications of their peculiar spirit. For every ancient people, with whose records I am acquainted, exhibit, in the discovery of such resemblances among their favourite objects and ideas, their own entirely peculiar method. We have such however from but few nations, because these are the very things, which belong to the inner sanctuary of each language, and are often as difficult to be understood, as incapable of being conveyed in another language.

We come now from riddles to puns. Of these the jovial Samson seems to have been peculiarly fond, and makes three or more of them on a single occasion.\*

With jaw-bone of an ass a mighty heap,†

With jaw-bone of an ass I slew a thousand men.

How idle and fruitless the task for us to analyze and vindicate every point of such a punning conceit in the mouth of a lighthearted hero intoxicated with victory! The word thousand too involves a double meaning, since the word signifies also a troop. Who then would take pains to number the slain, and determine, whether the punning hero had not made them more than they were?

When in his melancholy blindness he was about to die

\* Jud. xv. 16. † Ass and heap are the same word in the original,  
18\*

with his enemies, he embraced the pillars of the house and said,\*

Jehovah God, look down yet once upon me.  
I pray thee strengthen me this once again,  
I pray thee, that I yet may be avenged  
With one revenge for my two eyes.

The bitterest emotion here gave him, what on other occasions was the offspring of sport and irony, a verbal conceit.

Since these are alike numerous and diverse in the poetry of the Hebrews, and since very different judgments have been formed on account of the name, "pun" or verbal conceit; we shall follow the subject a little farther. Verbal conceits pervade all the writings of the Hebrews. Isaiah especially delighted in them, and the poets, who followed, copied his example in this also. For this very reason many of their most powerful and beautiful passages are wholly untranslatable.

I must request beforehand, however, that the term "pun" (wortspiel) may be omitted, and that we substitute the terms, verbal conceits, accordances of sound, paranomasia, &c. By the first we understand usually the low art, which the English call the art of punning, and of the levity of which the Hebrews knew nothing. Their conceits have regard to names, memorials, things, or they lie in the imperfections and structure of the language. From all these sources they pass very naturally into the sphere of poetry.

1. From the earliest times every thing among the Hebrews was dependant upon names. These involved their history, the memorials of the remembered past, the tradition of the patriarchal blessings. If one received his name from the circumstances of his birth, or the incidents of his life, there followed necessarily what may be called, if we choose, a play of words, but one of great importance in its relation to history.

\* Jud. xvi. 28.

We find examples of this from Adam downward. All the Patriarchs acquired their names in this way.

2. When these names were changed, or modified from incidents in the life of the individuals, there arose a new play of words, as agreeable to the ear, as it was important to the memory. Thus were the names of Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob changed,\* and perhaps those of Cain, of Noah and many others. Reference is often made to this in giving an account of their lives. Thus Isaac sported with his wife Rebecca.† So Ephraim, by a slight change, signified either a *fruitful branch*, or a *savage*.‡

3. Especially were the blessings associated with the names of the sons, on whom they were pronounced. Seth, Shem, Japheth, Judah, Gad, Ephraim, Dan,|| &c. include their blessings in the signification of the words. With the name of a Patriarch his posterity associated the blessing bestowed upon him. When the race fell away from God, the reproving Prophet changed also by a slight modification their auspicious to an ill omened name. All this was not mere play of wit, but a means of recollection for those, to whom it applied.

4. What is true of names holds also of monuments, and of cities. Remarkable incidents gave them their names, new events changed them, as the case might be. *Bethel*, the house of God, where Jacob slept, became *Beth-aven*; § the great stone (1 Sam. vi. 18) a *stone of sorrow* by a slight inflection of the name. So it was with the *heap*, which was to be a *witness*, (Gen. xxxi. 52.) Laban and Jacob gave it different names on the same grounds. How variously were the names of cities and nations changed and applied by the Prophets, who prophecied respecting them. Babel, Edom, Canaanites, Kenites, Ekron, Gaza, &c.

5. The same was true in regard to occurring events, whether in derision or commendation. Those, who rode on thirty

\* Gen. xvii. 5. 15. xxxii. 28. † Gen. xxvi. 28. ‡ Gen. xli. 52.  
Hos. xiii. 11. || Gen. iv. 25. ix. 26. 27. xlix. 8. 16, 19. 22. § Amos v. 5.

*asses*, acquired thirty *cities*.\* *Nabal* was a *fool*, as his name signified. Samuel was a gift of God, by a slight transformation of the word, because he had been asked of him in prayer.† To all this the language remarkably contributed, recurring as it does to so few radical words, and these so like each other, and by the uniform inflections of these effecting so many changes. A very elaborate treatise, which I have cited in the note,‡ has carefully collected these verbal conceits of the Hebrews, arranged according to the alphabet, and the principal variations.

6. Brought thus into this method by names and the structure of the language, and carried forward by the patriarchal benedictions, and the honour of the race as associated with their ancestral names, what could the poets do other and better, than to connect their maxims, and proverbs with this characteristic in the genius of the people and the language, and what they would say to the understanding say also to the memory and the ear. From the earliest periods down we find not only benedictions, but also laws and precepts preserved in forms of expressions, in which resemblances of sound are sought. He that sheddeth *man's blood*, by *man* shall his *blood* be shed. The *Gods* of the heathen are *no-gods*, senseless idols, &c. Isaiah is the most happy in impressing such sentences. *Leaders* are stubborn, refuse to be *led*, the *law* is *light*; the confiding are abiding. The mourners have *beauty* for *ashes*. Among the people, instead of *righteousness*, is *unrighteousness*, instead of *justice*, *injustice*, &c. plain and striking antitheses, which impress the sentiment of the Prophet deeply upon the mind. A part of the Proverbs of Solomon have the like correspondencies of sound, which as it were give point and completeness to the sense.

7. Especially in the use of symbols, which the Prophets see or show to the people, or of words, which they take as it were

\* Judg. x. 4. † 1 Sam. i. 27. 28.

‡ Christ. Bened. Michaelis diss. de paronomasia sacra. See also Vey-schuir de paronomasia in the collection of his dissertations.



out of their mouths, and point against themselves, we find the most artless and apt paranomasia, though for the most part incapable of translation. So is it with the language of Jeremiah, li. 20—23, and other places. Luther, the great master of the German language, has sometimes very happily imitated expressions of this sort, and it were to be wished, that where they effect the sense they might be generally preserved in the translation.

From what has been said it seems to me clear, that the Hebrew paranomasia is not so ridiculous a matter, as we are apt to infer from the place and character of such things in modern languages. That language was of a wholly different construction, and these verbal conceits had an entirely different aim. The Hebrews had no rhyme, but were fond of assonances and alliterations, to which the parallelism naturally led them. Which then is more intellectual and intelligible, the use of rhyme, which is an artifice merely for the ear, or the varied resemblance of sound to sense, where the word, as Pope expresses it, becomes an echo to the sense. How fine is the effect, when even in our rhymes or in Proverbs, antitheses, metaphors, images, the resemblances or diversity of the thoughts finds itself expressed also in an unsought but corresponding word. Even in philosophy happy expressions of the sort produce their effect, and carry home to the mind with the additional force of the word the observed distinction or resemblance in things. In the suggestions of wit and acuteness they are still more in place, and so long as a nation is still sensuous in the character of its mind, so long as they carry their language with them, as belonging to the mouth and the ear, and not in written characters for the eye, sounds of this kind, as voices speaking to the memory, are no less pleasing to them, than indispensable. Hence among all nations, who have no books or but few, the same fondness for assonance and verbal conceit. Hence among them especially that emphatic and legitimate brevity, that rapid and mem-

orable expressiveness, which the tracer of letters can never attain. Foolish and ridiculous, as it would be to imitate the taste of the Hebrew language in our own, which is of a different construction, and stands upon a different grade of cultivation, it is not less so to judge that people by ourselves, and not to make allowance in these respects for the early age, in which they lived, the simplicity of their language, and the correspondence between their outward sense and the inward character of their minds. Children delight in making paronomasia, and, if they have meaning, in hearing them too. They show, that he, who makes them, thinks in and by means of the language. Poetical nations never think otherwise, so that I might here by a paronomasia apply the address of Moses, (which is itself one also)

A voice of those that answer do I hear,  
 They shout not victory one to another,  
 They shout not overthrow one to another,  
 The voice of those that sing I hear.\*

Among the Hebrews history and poetry rest in a great measure on paronomasia, as on the originals of the language, and only by a taste for these can our ear come to an intimate acquaintance with the spirit of the language.

And this acquaintance is the more necessary, since their writers delight in copying and improving upon each other in whole phrases, which they unfold and amplify, each in his own peculiar style. This, too, if any choose to call it so, is a playing upon words, yet such as even the refined Greeks did not dislike. It was a favourite practice with them to express their own thoughts in the words of Homer and other distinguished ancient writers; and who would not be gratified by it? Both the speaker and hearer are gratified, the former with the successful exercise of his invention, the latter with finding a new friend in an old and favourite costume, a new

\* Ex. xxxii, 18.

thought in a known and approved form of expression. So the Prophets employ the figurative language of the Patriarchal benedictions and the Psalms. So the modern Hebrews employ the words of all the more ancient writers in a new sense, but in the same beautiful forms of expression. Their poetical language, in employing the expression of the Bible, may be said, perhaps, in some sense, to be nothing but a play upon words ; but how refined ! how interesting for one, who has a taste for the simplicity of ancient times, which in this way reappear, as it were, dressed in a finer costume. I could wish, that more of their poetry were known in our language, than has hitherto been, and my opinion concerning it would be sustained.—But enough on these topics ; I return to the writings of the age of Samson.

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That period, in regard to the condition of the people, was any thing but a happy one. Frequent collision with the neighbouring nations disquieted the land, and at length an atrocious crime led to a civil war and the almost entire extirpation of one of the tribes. Famine often bore heavily upon the country, and an occasion of this sort has given us the beautifully told family history of Ruth. In the time of Eli the decline of the nation, which was without any efficient head, was at its lowest pitch. The sanctuary itself, the ark of the covenant was captured by their enemies, and the family of the High Priest came to a miserable end.—Even then, however, the voice of poetry was not wholly silenced ; but assumed rather a new tone. Heroic songs were no longer heard, but the voice of the Prophetic muse returned. Jehovah fulfilled his word, and gave to the oppressed people a leader with a portion at least of the spirit of Moses. The calling of Samuel in the temple, as well as his history, is related with a quiet simplicity, and his mother's song of thanksgiving, brings before us another Deborah, though in a peaceful and domestic character.

**My heart rejoiceth in Jehovah,  
Through Jehovah is my horn of joy exalted.  
My mouth is opened wide in songs of triumph,  
For I exult in thy salvation.**

**There's none that's holy like Jehovah!  
No God but thee ! no guardian like our God :  
Why boast ye so of your high places ?\*  
Away with arrogance from out your mouths.  
Jehovah knoweth and will weigh your deeds.**

**The bows of the mighty are broken,†  
And they, that wavered, are girded with strength.  
Those, that were full, are begging for bread,  
Those, that were hungry, are now at rest,  
She, that was barren, hath sevenfold fruit,  
She, that had many sons, is now bereft of help.**

**Jehovah killeth, and he maketh alive,  
He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.  
Jehovah maketh poor and maketh rich,  
He bringeth low and lifteth up again.**

**He raiseth up the lowly from the dust,  
And lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,  
That he may seat them with the princes,  
And make them heirs to princely thrones.‡**

**For the fountains of the earth are Jehovah's,  
The world hath he established thereon.  
The footsteps of the faithful hath he assured,  
But the wicked are dumb in obscurity,  
For not by strength do heroes triumph.**

**Jehovah's adversaries shall be dashed in pieces,  
When he from heaven shall thunder on them,  
Jehovah shall judge the whole of his land,**

\* They strengthened themselves in these, and became self-confident. Asaph in Ps. lxxv. 6. has imitated, and beautifully varied this expression, as well as the whole song.

† A new period of tranquillity is beginning, in which even the feeble and the poor shall enjoy happiness. This she illustrates from her own history.

‡ As Samuel, when he was judge of the nation. The following lines are very applicable to him, and the family of Eli, though I would not restrict their more general sense.

Shall give his king heroick strength,  
And far exalt the power of his anointed.

Whether Hannah uttered this song, or is merely represented as uttering it, it is enough, that it anticipates and predicts different times from what were then experienced. The storms of war were passed away. The insolence of individuals, exalted in power and privilege, was at an end; and God had given to others the song of triumph. Freed at length from the shame of barrenness, she sees her son rising from his low condition to take his seat with princes, as one of the nobles of the land, as a judge of the people. The family of Eli sinks into obscurity while he rises to distinction. By him Jehovah judges the whole country, even to its borders, and through his means, too, anoints over Israel a brave and fortunate king. Such is the tone of this song, and it became the model for many Psalms, resembling it both in style and matter; for it was a prediction of what was always the favourite topic of the nation, a new and happier era.

This happier era Samuel established at least prospectively. He was the first Prophet after Moses, who exerted an influence on the political organization of the state. God called him not by a vision, but by a distinct voice, in which he signified to him the downfall of the vicious and indolent family of priests, which had hitherto ruled. His answers were always distinct and determinate, and hence he was denominated a Seer, instead of a Prophet. The expression continued in use for a considerable period, and even David retained his Seers, until Prophets again appeared.

It is undeniable, that Samuel employed the first tranquil period in the organization of the state, as far as he was able, for commencing also the intellectual cultivation of his people. He established the schools of the Prophets;\* and though we

\* The word used, 2 Sam. vii. 8. means a shepherd's cottage or fold, but the Prophets we know lived in the most simple manner.

need not adopt the extravagant conceptions sometimes formed of them, yet their organization by Samuel was marked with wisdom. He sought to bring the arts of cultivation, which then consisted of musick and poetry, from the exclusive possession of a single tribe into general use. "The hill of God"\* resounded with the songs of the Prophets, i. e. the pupils of a free system of national instruction and wisdom. They dwelt in simple cottages, which have been very incorrectly translated schools, and conveyed the notion of something corresponding to our own schools of learning. They were simply assemblages of young men, or those of maturer age, practising themselves under the direction of Samuel, who was the judge and father of the state, in what then pertained to national cultivation, not therefore, in ravings concerning futurity, nor in barren litanies connected with the service of the temple. When they met Saul, by the sentiment and lofty style of their songs they inspired him with the first feelings worthy the heart of a king,† and these alas ! continued only till his regal power was established. In their songs, which probably sung of his own regal dignity, the humble herdsman first felt himself inspired with more elevated thoughts, and more daring resolution ; and even in later times, when in pursuit of David, he forgot even his mortal foe, seated himself among them naked, i. e. in the simple dress of a Prophet divested of his regal ornaments, and touched the strings of his own forgotten harp.— Would that some specimens, at least, remained to us from these hills of God, these airy elevations, vocal with national songs, and the poetry of nature ! But they are lost in oblivion. The association of poetry with the residence, the court,

\* 1 Sam. x. 5.

† The passage has been rendered ridiculous by being misinterpreted. It was not by the sound of their instruments, that they gave Saul the heart of a king, but by the sentiment of their songs accompanied with the sound.

and the temple of David soon rendered these hills silent and desolate, brought every thing within a narrow compass, and those ancient songs of war and victory, those fables, and unconfined songs of the Prophets of Samuel—were lost forever.

Yet the germ, and the earliest flowers of the poetry of David belong also to these times. The pastures of his flocks were vocal with the songs of his youthful Muse, and by these he gained access to the king and to the friendship of Jonathan. But this period in the history of David is characterised more by the friendship between him and Jonathan, than by all his poetical effusions. David appears before Jonathan a youth, and after a deed of daring enterprize, which the latter could not himself accomplish. Yet, instead of envying, he conceives for him a sentiment of affection. “His soul was knit with the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul.”\* He justified him, also, to his father, (even by representations not entirely true, and which might have fallen upon his own head). He set honour and life at stake; disregarding the impression made, that he gave up the throne from want of enterprise, and even the derogatory epithets bestowed upon him by his father; for he was indeed a true and genuine hero. I seem even now to see them, as before the face of heaven, with kisses and tears, they confirm by an oath their perpetual covenant,† and Jonathan, as, after a long absence, he comes to his friend in the desert, encourages him, and says,‡ “fear not David, the hand of my father shall not find thee. Thou shalt be king over Israel and I shall be next unto thee.” What heroick friendship was this! He offered up the throne to him, that as a friend he might continue nearest his person. Only an age of poetry, and souls like Jonathan’s, but rarely found, are capable of such a covenant of love and fidelity. When Jonathan died and left the throne to his friend, what could that friend give him for all the kindness, which he had shown him,

\* 1 Sam. xviii. 1.

† 1 Sam. xx. 41.

‡ 1 Sam. xxiii. 16.

but an elegy upon his tomb? an elegy, in which, however, beautiful as it is, the memory of Saul and that of Jonathan live united, as if both had equal claims upon his heart. I know, indeed, it was written for the people,\* but for myself I could have wished, that it might be written for David and for Jonathan alone, not for Saul and the people. And his son Mophibosheth—what apology can be found for David, that he so readily sacrificed this son of the friend of his youth to a false accusation, and, when it was proved to be false, instead of restoring him threefold, merely divided what had been taken from him between him and his base accuser?† And how lamentable, too, that he must give up the sons of Saul, who yet were all of them brothers of Jonathan, in compliance with the cruel request of a city, to a death so shameful!‡ Here is the beautiful elegy of David on Saul and Jonathan. To me the heart of Jonathan remains sacred, and may his name forever adorn the altar of friendship.

### DAVID'S LAMENTATION

FOR JONATHAN, HIS FRIEND.

Beautiful Roe, thou pride and glory of Israel!

Thus then art thou wounded upon thy high places!

**CHORUS.** Fallen, fallen are the heroes!

How are the heroes fallen?

Tell ye it not in Gath,

Publish it not in the streets of Askelon,

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,

Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised leap for joy.

Ye mountains of Gilboa, on you henceforth

Let no more rain nor dew descend forever.

No more on you, ye mountains blighted with a curse,

For there the shield of heroes was struck down,

\* 2 Sam. i. 17. 18.

† 2 Sam. xvi. 4. xix. 29.

‡ 2 Sam. xxi. 8—10. where the beautiful account of Rizpah, the mother of two of the sons of Saul, is related. Every one is reminded by it of the Antigone of Sophocles.



The shield of Saul, as of one unconsecrated with oil.

From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the strong,  
The bow of Jonathan never turned backward,  
The sword of Saul returned not empty. (It reached the blood of  
the slain.)

Saul and Jonathan, dear to each other in life,  
They went undivided in love to the realm of shades.  
Swifter than eagles, bolder were they than lions.

Daughters of Israel, weep ye for Saul,  
No more will he clothe you in garments of purple,  
Nor deck your apparel with ornaments of gold.

CHORUS. *Ah ! how are the heroes fallen in the midst of battle,  
Jonathan, thou lovely Roe, slain on thy high places.*

I am afflicted for thee, my brother Jonathan,  
Lovely wast thou to me, exceeding lovely,  
Yea, my love for thee surpassed the love of women.

CHORUS. *Ah ! how are the heroes fallen,  
And their weapons of war perished.*

NOTE. I have omitted a more literal version of the lamentation of David inserted by the German Editor. The sense as given by him, where it differs from the above agrees with the version of the English Bible. That version, is indeed, very true to the original, and not the less poetical on that account. Tr,

## IX.

**History of David as the author of the Psalms. How this kind of poetry came into use by his means. In what relation it stood to the more ancient poetry. Perversion of the Psalms in the common use made of them. The proper and natural view to be taken of them. Rules for using them aright. How far the common division of the Psalms into higher, middle, and lower is to be regarded. Division of them according to their lyrical character. Psalms expressive of a single sentiment or picture. Examples. Psalms comprehending several contrasted sentences and members. Examples. Psalms expressive of emotion, and didactic Psalms. Examples. Services of a German poet in transferring the poetical tone of the Psalms into our language.**

In the time of David the Lyric poetry of the Hebrews attained its highest splendour. The scattered wild flowers of the country were now gathered and planted, as a royal garland, upon Mount Zion. From his youth upward the mind of David had been attuned to musick and poetry. He had spent the happiest years of youth, as a tender of flocks, and amidst their rural haunts. There he had gathered those flowers of pastoral poetry, which often adorn, also, his heroick Psalms, and even those expressive of sadness and affliction. By musick, with which was then combined not only poetry, but whatever of cultivation belonged to the age, he had first found access to the person of the king. This circumstance, undoubtedly, contributed to make him cultivate and strengthen still more the powers of his Muse. Soon after, as if the same art was to be for him the occasion both of good and evil fortune, in consequence of the triumphal song of the women, who went out to meet him, he was regarded as the rival of Saul, and in several instances scarcely escaped, with his harp

in his hand, the javelin of the king. He betook himself to flight, and for years either alone or with a few companions, wandered about the deserts of Judæa, and was like a bird upon the mountains. Here his harp became his comforter and friend. To it he uttered the complaints, which he could confide to none else. It calmed his fears, made him forget his misery, as once it had subdued the evil spirit in Saul, and made him forget his envy and vexation. From it he now drew forth tones, which were an echo to his feelings in sorrow and in joy, and the most tender and impassioned among them were prayers; prayers by which his courage was excited, his hope confirmed, until in the providence of God he triumphed over all. Now his harp became in his royal hands consecrated as a thankoffering to the publick. Not merely that he himself, as he had often promised, made publick the prayers relating to his own distress and deliverance; he organized and devoted, in a far greater measure than had before been done, musick and poetry for celebrating the service of God, and promoting the magnificence of the temple. Four thousand Levites, distinguished by a peculiar dress, were arranged in classes and choirs under master-singers, of whom the three most distinguished, Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun are known to us by specimens of their art. The children of Korah, probably, belonged to the middle class. David employed himself even as king to increase the treasures of this temple musick. Dangers and triumphs, especially the very great danger and affliction experienced from the rebellion of Absalom, awakened again the slumbering tones of his youthful harp, to sing of royal cares and troubles. Every important measure which he adopted, especially the consecration of Mount Zion, was brought into general notice, and placed in a clear light by his own poetical effusions, and those of the poets employed under his patronage. In his Psalms his whole kingdom still lives. These were sung at the publick festivals. Dazzled with the magnificence of the king and the royal city,

original sense, as the book of Psalms. As David in his own age gave his own feelings and sentiments general currency, and rendered his own style the predominant one in the songs of the temple; so the book was destined to become the book of devotional song for every age, for all nations, and all hearts, though they had no connexion either with the spirit or the deeds of David. What else could result from this, but a great extension of the sense of the author, and an application of his language to objects and feelings very different from those, which it originally designated? Every commentator, every versifier found here his own age, the wants of his own soul, his own domestic and family relations, and on this ground adapted it to the singing and reading of his own church. In that all the Psalms of David were sung, as if every member of the church had wandered upon the mountains of Judah, and been persecuted by Saul. They sung with zeal against Doeg and Ahitophel, imprecated curses upon the Edomites and the Moabites, and where they could do no more they put the imprecations in the mouth of Him, who never returned railing for railing, nor threatening for injustice. Let one read the most individualized, the most characteristically beautiful songs of David, of Asaph and of Korah; in many versifications of them, then turn back to the original situations and sources of the feelings which they depict, and will he find them always retaining even a shadow of their ancient form?

In order to attain a clear view of the Psalms, as lyric poems of the age of David, the following particulars are indispensable.

1. That we forget all modern imitations, and commentators, even though most highly prized, and the best for their own times. They read them in accordance with the purpose, at which they aimed, each for his own age, and with an application to this of the language, the consolations, and instructions of the book. Our aim is to see it in its circumstan-

oes of times and place, and in these the heart, and understanding of David, and the poets associated with him.

2. In accordance with this aim the first inquiry should be for the objects and situations, in reference to which these songs were severally composed. These are given at the head of many of the Psalms; in others they are determined by the contents, and in others still it must be left undetermined. Two things here, however, must be guarded against. In the first place, that we do not insist upon finding a Psalm for every trifling event in the life of David, nor invent for every figurative expression in the Psalms a corresponding situation in his life. The first has been done in relation to David, just as in relation to other lyric poets. A locality is sought for every thing, and a memorial for every event. In pursuit of the second, to find a situation, to which every word refers, strange things have been imagined, of which the interpreter indeed might know something, but of which the poet certainly knew nothing.

3. We must study the peculiar language of David and his contemporaries, by comparing the different Psalms with each other, and with the history of the age. That the royal poet had his favourite expressions, needs no proof; and they may all be explained from the situations in which he was placed. "The Lord is my shield, he is on my right hand, he setteth me in a wide place, he leadeth me to high places," &c., are of this kind, and a series of others, which in part with some modification of sense were for centuries current in the church. A collection of poetical idioms for all these songs would be a useful book, and indeed we are in need of a similar collection for all the principal writers of the Old Testament.

4. We should regard the feelings that prevail in the Psalms neither as an enemy, nor yet as blind defenders of them. They exhibit the characteristic traits of individual men, and as such should be explained, without being dressed up as a model of holy feelings for all men. David had his peculiar

feelings and cares, both as an exiled wanderer, and as a king. We are neither of these, and need therefore neither imprecate curses upon enemies, whom we have not, nor magnify ourselves as their conquerors; but we must learn at the same time to understand and appreciate these feelings. The Scripture itself gives us a rich commentary on the subject, for it does not disguise the character of David, even in regard to his failings. The man who sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, may also be too hasty in his language. He was rash, oppressed and a warrior. He spake often not in his own name, but in the name of his people, as a father of his country. But always, and in all circumstances, he was a man. His songs illustrate his history, and his history aids the interpretation of his songs; but he, that aims to see every where in them the superhuman and unearthly, will at last see nothing distinctly.

5. Again, in studying these as specimens of art, we must take no examples from other nations and languages, as models, by which to judge of them; for the composition of such effusions must be judged with reference to the peculiar nature of the feelings, sentiments and language, out of which they have grown. To what does it amount, indeed, when we say, that this or that Psalm is Pindaric? merely that it contains bold transitions, lofty sentiments, and historical allusions? and must not the same necessarily be found in all laudatory odes? Yet, in regard to the art of composition, David has nothing more than this in common with Pindar. The language of Pindar's lyric poetry, his periods, and metrical arrangement, the mode of treating his subjects, derived from mythology and ancient history, and the nature of his subjects themselves, hardly admit of a comparison, and we are sure to draw false conclusions, when we suffer ourselves to be blinded by the word chorus. A Hebrew is by no means the same thing with a Grecian chorus.

6. Still less should the style of David be judged by the rules

of lyric poetry formed in our own age, and not applicable even to all the odes of Horace, though from these they are professedly abstracted. The critick, who formed them, had for the most part, too narrow views, was not extensively acquainted with the lyrical treasures of different languages, confined himself to a few favourite specimens, and by these framed his general rules. How then can they be expected to apply to an entirely different age? to situations and languages far more simple? Where the rules are true, they occasion no constraint, but flow spontaneously from the nature of the emotions, and the impression upon the heart of the object which the poet represents. The characteristic traits of the poet, of the situation, and the language, unite their influence in the result produced. The rules, therefore, always require actual experience of their truth, and yet admit of this test but partially. In short, where they are true, who would not rather, in reading a poetical effusion, feel and unfold them himself, by his own original experience, than borrow them from foreign models and arts of poetry, and thus violate the primitive simplicity of ancient song, by the artificial subtleties of modern invention. Whoever is not qualified to feel the beauty of musical and harmonious poetry, unaided and of himself, will never learn to feel it by force of artificial rules.

7. We must unfold and experience in ourselves the original nature and beauty of the Hebrew lyric poetry. The teacher should lead the scholar to observe—what is its particular objects represented—what is the interest attached to it—in what manner it is presented—what feeling prevails in the piece—what style and movement it holds—into what train of sentiment it expands itself—how it begins, proceeds and ends. The more simply and impressively this is pointed out to the youthful reader, without the technicalities of art, and without enthusiastick warmth of commendation, the more will the poetry find its way to his heart. What is beautiful in it he will love without noisy commendation; original strains of im-

passioned feeling will of themselves make their impression upon him, and, if he has a spark of lyric feeling in his bosom, Jehovah will give him inspiration. In Hebrew lyric poetry, simplicity, in this development of it, is especially necessary, since of all poetry it was least constructed by rule, and as a work of art, and was rather poured forth spontaneously, as genuine feeling wells up from a heart filled with lively emotions. Would that we had an edition of the Psalms, in which David was treated merely as Horace is ! in which, without casuistic subtleties, the poet should be shown as a poet, his beauty not indeed, cried into our ears, but at the same time not defaced by the patchwork of languages and versification foreign to its nature. In higher criticism upon the poetry of the Hebrews we are still but children. We either stifle ourselves with various readings, or embellish the simplicity of the original with the modish attire of modern languages.

I will now go through the Book of Psalms, in order to mark some of the chief varieties of their lyrical style. To do it fully would not accord with my present plan, and no one will expect me in a few brief sketches, to exhaust the variety to be found in this collection of one hundred and fifty songs.

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It is customary to divide the Psalms into the elevated, the middle, and those of a lower tone, and this is very well, if the division taught any thing definite. Any matter of any considerable extent can be divided in this way ; but the question, always remains to be settled, where each particular piece belongs. Now, let one arrange them, as he will, with reference to this division, and he will be at a loss in many cases, where to place them. The successive steps of lyrical elevation are so numerous, and the tones so near together, or rather so flow into each other, that it would be difficult to apply such a principle of arrangement to the whole number of Psalms, and after



all of what use is the whole system. Let us, then, endeavour to attain the object in a different way.

1. Some Psalms are short. They unfold only a single image in a simple and uniform tone of feeling, and terminate with a beautiful completeness in the expression. I might call them *odes*, expressive of *a single thought*, εἰδῆ, if the last word did not imply something foreign. Of this sort is the beautiful 133d Psalm, which breathes a fragrance delicate as a rose,

### BROTHERLY UNION.

Behold, how lovely and how pleasant,  
When brothers dwell in peace together !  
Thus breathed its fragrance round  
The precious ointment on the head,  
That ran adown the beard of Aaron,  
And reached the border of his garment,  
So descends the dew of Hermon,  
Refreshing Zion's mountains,\*  
For there Jehovah gave command,  
That blessings dwell forevermore.

The union of brothers, of tribes, and families is here compared with objects of highest sacredness and beauty, and which diffuse an animating fragrance. So the good name of families dwelling in unison is diffused, and gives them dignity and honour. So the dew of Hermon descends to water the parched mountains of Zion, and make them productive of blessings.—As a national song for their festivals, it has a perfect and beautiful close, From the flowing ointment he comes to the

\* The conception here is not *flowing down*, which could not be from Hermon upon Zion but falling, as dew or rain. From the woody Libanus and Hermon, and from the sea, ascended the vapours, which came down upon the parched mountains of Judæa. It seems to have been a requisite in the songs sung at national festivals, that Jerusalem or Zion should be mentioned. Hence the figure here. There seems to be no necessity for altering the text.

descending dew, and from this to the invocation of blessings upon Zion—the true compass of an ode. Aaron's name itself presents a fine example of a peaceful brother, whom his own brother anointed with the blessing of God and the glory of Israel,

### A SHEPHERD'S SONG.

#### THE 23D PSALM.

Jehovah is my shepherd,  
I shall not want.  
He maketh me lie down  
Upon the green pastures,  
He leadeth me  
Beside the still waters,  
Restoring my life.

He leadeth me in a straight path,  
Still faithful to his name.  
And though I walk  
Through death's dark valley,  
I fear no evil,  
For thou art with me,  
Thy trusty shepherd's staff  
Is comfort and support,  
Here, spread before my eyes,  
Thou hast prepared my table,  
In presence of my foes,  
My head thou dost anoint,  
My cup is running over.

Yea, goodness and mercy follow me  
Through all the days of my life.  
I shall return to the house of God,  
As long as I live,

From the close it is plain, that this beautiful Psalm was composed in exile. The commencement is a quiet pastoral, but his feelings lead him to drop the image of his sheep, and a table, a royal feast, is spread before the eyes of his oppressors. This joyful hope rises to a full conviction, that success will attend him, as long as he lives. The sudden transition

from one image to another, is in the spirit of the Oriental ode. Yet but one feeling pervades the whole.

Those who would examine more specimens of this sort may read the 15th, 29th, 61st, 67th, 87th, 101st, 150th, and other Psalms. I could wish that I were able to translate all these, so much am I delighted by their simple beauty.

2. So soon as a lyrical effusion, either from the comprehensiveness of its subject, or the fuller expression of emotion, becomes extended, it requires variety, contrasts, a manifoldness of parts, which in the former kind we perceive only in the bud, in a trifling variation of the image. Here, according to the Oriental style, a great effect is produced by change of person, questions and answers, sudden appeals to inanimate or absent objects, and, if in the form thus enlarged a sort of *lyrical representation and action* can be introduced, the ode attains its highest perfection. It has, in this way, a beginning, middle and end, the last returning again to the first, and the whole forming thus, a lyrical garland. This is what the critics call the beautiful irregularity, the ambitus, of the Ode, *the flight*, in which it *strays*, but is never *lost*. The whole presents itself before us, a picture full of living action. No word can be taken away, no strophe change its place. The beginning and the end are necessary to the middle, and the middle remains impressed upon the memory. Perfect odes of this sort, are few in number in all languages, because there are few subjects, that admit of being treated in this way, but where they are found they should be kept in perpetual remembrance. To the class of songs composed of several members I reckon among the Psalms, the 8th, 20th, 21st, 48th, 50th, 76th, 96th—99th, 111th—113th, 120th—129th. Among the perfect specimens, which have not only variety and contrast, but a progressive lyrick action, I venture to name the 2d, 24th, 45th—47th, 80th, 110th, 114th and 127th Psalms. Some include here, also, the 29th and 68th, because, in the voice of God in the former, and the carrying of the ark in the

latter, they suppose a local progress of the representation ; but for this I see no ground. The principle of progression must be inward, from the one living fountain of excited emotion, and cannot come from outward geographical relations. But few of all these can be introduced here, and the choice is difficult.

### THE ENTRANCE OF GOD UPON MOUNT ZION.

#### THE 24TH PSALM.

- ALL**        Jehovah's is the earth and its fulness,  
               The world and they that dwell therein,  
               For he hath founded it upon the seas,  
               He hath established it upon the floods.
1.        Who shall ascend the mountain of Jehovah ?  
               Who dare to stand in his most holy place ?
2.        He that hath clean hands, and pure heart,  
               That hath not bound his soul with perfidy,  
               Nor ever sworn deceitfully.  
               He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah,  
               The approbation of his guardian God.\*
1.        This is the people, that seek after him,  
               That seek thy face, O God of Jacob.
- CHORUS.**    Lift up your heads, O ye gates,  
               And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors,  
               For the king of glory will come in.
1.        Who is the king of glory ?  
               Jehovah strong and mighty,
2.        Jehovah mighty in battle.
- CHORUS.**    Lift up your heads, O ye gates,  
               And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors,  
               For the king of glory will come in.
1.        Who is the king of glory ?
- CHORUS.**    Jehovah, God of Gods ! he is the king of glory.

\* Political crimes were very properly named here, since he must be free from these, who would approach his national God. The blessing, which he was to receive, is in like manner of a civil nature. The word means properly justification, i. e. in a civil or political sense, and because this involved the keeping of the law of God, and was enjoyed by such as had access to him, it became in the Psalms synonymous with happiness, grace.

The change of voices in this Psalm is obvious to every ear, and it is equally plain that there is a progressive transition of thought, in its economy full of life and action. It commences magnificently with the sentiment, "the earth is Jehovah's." He is to dwell here upon the hill of Zion, and the whole earth will be spread out before him. The transition from the sentiment in the beginning to this little mountain is very beautiful. It becomes a holy mountain, because Jehovah dwells upon it, and that both in a moral and a civil sense; for as nothing impure in sacrifices could be brought before God, so no impure worshipper could appear before him. It seems appropriate too, that only such vices are mentioned here, as are injurious to the general welfare; for Jehovah dwelt here as their national God, as the founder and protector of the Jewish State.\* The remainder of the Psalm is full of action. A multitude presents itself, knocking at the gates, and eager to behold the face of the monarch; and lo! it is Jehovah himself, the ark of the covenant, over which dwelt their ancient God, the leader of their armies. He, who in ancient times had gained so many victories, a glorious king, renowned in war, and shown to be mighty in power, was proclaimed by the answering chorus, and as such he was to dwell by the residence of the heroic king, upon mount Zion, his recent conquest. The ancient doors of his tabernacle must therefore raise their heads, that such a monarch might come in! How picturesque and striking the representation! God entered into a small tent, and would have no temple built for him by David, so that its ancient narrow doors have no magnificence, but what is derived from him, who enters within them. In order to give roundness and dignity to the piece the particular incidents attending the procession, and historically described

\*This portion of the Psalm, as its connexion with the remainder was only casual, and they could not always be sung together, became a national song by itself, (Ps. xv.) as it well deserved to be.

in the 68th Psalm, are here passed over. By comparing them any one may understand the difference between two songs, the one of which is a picture full of living action, and the other history lyrically narrated. Let us now take up a Psalm of the same sort, but breathing a milder spirit; the most beautiful epithalamium of so early times.

### THE ROYAL BRIDE.

#### A SONG OF LOVE.\*

My heart is uttering words of gratulation,

My work is consecrated to the king.

My tongue is like a ready writer's pen,

Lo, thou art fairer than the sons of men,

And grace is poured upon thy lips,

Therefore, God hath blessed thee forever.

Gird on thy sword upon thy thigh,

Most Mighty; with thy glory and thy majesty,

And in thy majesty go forth victorious,

Because of truth and the oppressed's right.

And fearful deeds shall thy right hand perform,

The arrows of thy quiver—(even now

I see the nations falling at thy feet)—

They pierce, O king, the hearts of thine enemies.

Thy throne, Lord, is forever and ever,

The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

Thou lovest righteousness, and hates iniquity,

Therefore hath God, thy God, anointed thee

With oil of joy above thy brethren.

Thy garments are all fragrant

With myrrh and aloes, and cassia.

From Armenia's ivory palaces,

Kings' daughters make thee joyful

In thy magnificence.

But at thy side,

Thy queen is standing, clothed in gold of Ophir.

Hearken, O daughter, look, incline thine ear,

Forget thy people, and thy father's house,

So shall the king desire thy beauty,  
For he is now thy lord, incline to him.

The daughters, too, of Tyre with presents  
Shall come to thee; the rich among the people  
Shall seek thy favour.

The king's bride  
Is beautiful exceedingly—and she herself  
More beautiful, than her attire of gold.

And now shall she be brought unto the king,  
Adorned with garments of needle work.  
The virgins, her companions, follow her,  
They shall be brought to thee,  
With joy and jubilee shall they be brought,  
And enter now the palace of the king.

In thy fathers' stead, O queen, shall be thy sons,  
And thou shalt make them princes in the land.

But I will spread thy praise from age to age,  
And thus the nations sing of thee, forever and ever.

I have not felt at liberty, in translating this, to destroy the delightful simplicity of its age by modern embellishment. On this simplicity, and its relation to Oriental customs, depends the progress and the whole representative action of the ode. It begins with an annunciation of the subject, and a sort of dedication to the king. It then, first, clothes the bridegroom in all the ornaments of beauty, grace, heroick and regal costume, and makes him worthy of reverence and love, before it places his bride beside him. The ode is from the age of Solomon. This is shown by the description of the magnificent palace, by the daughters of foreign kings, but especially by the representation of the king himself, on whom are heaped all the blessings, which God had promised to the lineage of David. As a hero and king he is represented with arms, his golden sceptre in his hand, the rich anointing oil upon his head, and his garments breathing precious odours. All these representations are derived, partly from the history of Solomon, who was preferred to the throne before his brothers, and partly from the benediction pronounced upon him, that his king-

dom should be a peaceful and perpetual reign of righteousness, in which oppression should cease, and the rights of the oppressed be vindicated. A transition is then made to the bride. Kings' daughters minister to his happiness in his palace, but one is the special object of his love and admiration. As bride and consort she stands beside him clothed in purest gold. The song, then, with childlike simplicity addresses itself to the modest and timid bride, admonishing her to look from her veil and observe him; to forget now her own country, and devote herself to her king, who would then love her in return, and be attracted by her beauty. All this is in accordance with Oriental customs, where the bride was little more than a child, and the superiour power and influence of the husband over her was very great. Soon, however, she shall enjoy the prerogatives of her station, the daughters of Tyre, the mart of all costly and precious things, shall wait upon her with bridal presents, and rich princes shall sue to her for her friendship and intercession. In language still more personal and flattering it is then added, that she is beautiful, not only in her outward embellishments, but that her own hidden person constitutes her loveliness, and excels in beauty all the precious stones of her attire. In like manner she is brought richly adorned to the palace; the procession moves with songs and rejoicing out of the view of the poet, and he only adds his wish modestly intimated, that she may enjoy the blessings of a happy marriage. The song closes in a lofty tone, as it had begun in a style of refinement, and exhibits throughout discernment, loftiness of conception, and gracefulness of style.

We proceed now to other Psalms, which have not indeed, so wide a compass in the action, which they develope, but yet form a beautiful whole, composed of several distinct members.



## DELIVERANCE FROM DANGER

A NATIONAL SONG.\*

Had not Jehovah been with us,  
 (May Israel now say)  
 Had not Jehovah been with us,  
 When men rose up against us,  
 Then had they swallowed us up,  
 In their fierce wrath against us.  
 Then had the waters overwhelmed us,  
 The waves had gone over our souls,  
 The swelling flood passed over our life.

Blessed be God ! He gave us not  
 To become a prey to their teeth.  
 Our souls have escaped,  
 As a bird from the snare of the fowler,  
 The snare is broken and we are escaped.

Our help is in the name of Jehovah,  
 Who created the heavens and the earth.

The 129th Psalm is obviously formed upon the same lyrical model.

## DELIVERANCE FROM DANGER.

A NATIONAL SONG.

Often have they oppressed me from my youth,  
 (May Israel now say,)  
 Often have they oppressed me from my youth,  
 Yet have they not prevailed against me.  
 The plowers plowed upon my back,  
 They made their furrows long.  
 The righteous God hath cut the cords of the wicked,  
 The foes of Zion shall return confounded.  
 As grass upon the housetops must they be,  
 That before it is ripened withereth away,  
 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand,  
 Nor the binder of sheaves his arm,  
 Where none that pass by say,  
 "The blessing of God be on you,  
 We bless you in the name of Jehovah."

\* Ps. cxxiv.

Similar to these is the beautiful song respecting the return from captivity, in which the first deliverance by Moses which they anticipated, and made use of to enkindle their hopes, and strengthen their confidence, is compared with the second.

### DELIVERANCE FROM CAPTIVITY.

A NATIONAL SONG. PS. 126.

When God turned back the captives of Zion,\*  
 We were like them that dream.  
 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,  
 Our tongue with songs of joy.†  
 Then said they among the nations,  
 The Lord hath done great things for them.‡  
 The Lord hath done great things for us,  
 Whereof we are glad!

Turn then again our captivity, O Lord  
 As thou turnedst the streams in the South.§  
 The sower soweth in tears,  
 And reapeth with songs of joy,  
 He goeth weeping, and beareth his seed,  
 He cometh with singing, and bringeth his sheaves.

Can a nation be called barbarous, that has even a few such national songs? and how many of them do we find among the Hebrews? I cannot deny myself the pleasure of closing this class of the Psalms with an elegy, that belongs indeed to a late age, but is not on that account less beautiful.

\* From Egypt. [This reference of it to Egypt is not a very probable one, and the deliverance by Moses could scarcely be called with propriety a *return to Zion*. The Psalm refers properly only to the Babylonish exile. The poet means to say, we could scarcely conceive the unexpected joy of deliverance from Babylon, we thought it a dream. &c. These remarks apply also to other notes of the author on this psalm. J.]

† Ex. 15.

‡ Ex. xv. 14. These words acquire a clear, beautiful import, when understood of the first deliverance, and this reference of the ode gives its chief beauty as a whole.

§ That is in the Red Sea. Ex. 14.

## THE CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON.

THE 137TH PSALM.

By the rivers of Babylon we sat down,  
And wept, when we remembered Zion.  
We hanged our harps upon their willows.

For they, that held us in captivity,  
Required of us a song,  
Our oppressors required of us mirth.  
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."  
How shall we sing Jehovah's song  
In a foreign land !

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem !  
Let my right hand forget me,  
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.  
If I do not remember thee,  
If I prefer not Jerusalem  
Above my highest joy.

Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom.  
In the day of Jerusalem's affliction,  
When they cried, "raze it,  
Raze it, even to its foundation."

Daughter of Babylon, the desolate,\*  
Blessed be he, that requiteth thee,  
That requiteth thee, as thou hast done to us.  
Happy shall he be that seizeth thy little ones,  
And casteth them upon the rocks.

I do not join in the imprecation of the last lines ; but if the song was written during, or immediately after, the Babylonish captivity, its accents must be felt, as touching and natural—and his beloved country is in the view of the poet sacred above every other object.

3. Every emotion has its perfect sphere, in which its action may be contemplated as a whole. The sorrow, which exalts itself to joy, the anxiety, which exhausts itself, and sinks to rest, the calm tranquility, which changes into a joyful confidence, the contemplative mood, that at length loses itself in

an ecstasy, and the rapture, which sinks again into calm contemplation—every effect has its own determinate course, and gives consequently, a corresponding ambitus to the lyric expression of it, in which we feel its completeness. I must go through nearly all the remaining Psalms, if I would arrange them according to these principles, for all are animated with feeling. I give here only a few examples.

Psalms, in which the feelings are elevated from a tone of lamentation to hope and confidence. 6th, 22d, 60th, 62d, 85th, 145th, and many others.

Psalms, in which an ardent and heroic spirit is raised, till it sinks again to repose in the remembrance of God. 7th, 10th, 13th, 17th, 26th, 35th, 36th, 52d—59th, 61st, 64th, 69th—71st, 86th, 88th, 94th, 109th, 140th—142d. These, too, are very numerous.

Psalms, in which a tranquil confidence is expressed throughout. 3d—5th, 11th, 17th, 21st, 25th, 27th, 28th, 30th, 37th, 41st, 44th, 63d, 65th, 131st, 132d, &c.

Others are triumphal songs merely, and of these, besides the sublime odes already introduced, I will name only the 9th, 18th, 33d, 34th, 66th, 116th—118th, 138th.—It would be too tedious to go through with specimens of all these several kinds. Let the teacher point them out to his hearers, and those most uniform in their tone, when psychologically considered, will be found beautiful. Of these referred to, I can give here but a single specimen.

## SORROW AND HOPE.

### THE 6TH PSALM.

O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath,  
Nor chasten me in thy fierce anger.  
Be merciful to me, O Jehovah! for I am weak.  
Heal me, O Jehovah, for my bones tremble;  
My whole soul is in terrors.  
And thou, Jehovah? O how long!

Return, O Jehovah, deliver my soul.  
 O save me for thy mercies' sake.  
 For in death there is no remembrance of thee,  
 In the grave, who shall give thee thanks ?

I am wearied with my groaning,  
 All night my bed is wet with tears.  
 With tears I make my couch to swim,  
 Mine eye is consumed with sorrow,  
 It looks but feebly upon all mine enemies.

Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity !  
 For God hath heard the voice of my weeping.  
 Jehovah hath heard my supplication,  
 Jehovah hath accepted my prayer.  
 Ashamed, confounded, shall be my enemies,  
 They shall fall back, and be ashamed suddenly.

Unsuitable as this may be for a general prayer of penitence, its tone and current of feeling is still strikingly beautiful, considered in relation to David as an individual. The languishing, and now aged, and feeble king, who feels his misfortunes as the chastisement of God, indulges in grief, till he sinks to the brink of the grave, but, when the word "enemies" is uttered from his lips, his emotions change, his courage and hope return. As most of the Psalms are an artless representation of particular situations, much still remains to be learned from them of the natural movement of lyrical emotion and expression.

4. In many of the Psalms, which contain moral sentiments, a beautiful system of instruction prevails. Of these, the 14th, 19th, 32d, 39th, 49th, 91st, 103d, 115th, 139th, and the didactic Psalms of Asaph generally may be named, as particularly worthy of attention. In the 9th Psalm, some have attempted to point out a twofold subject, but I do not discover it. From the great and general household of God in nature, where every object praises him and obeys his commands, the poet comes to the more intimate relation of God to his people, which he represents as more secure and affectionate, in the

same degree as it is more limited and confiding. The movement of the ode, therefore, is antithetic. The first image presented is raised to its greatest dignity, when it is interrupted, and the tone of the language becomes more and more gentle and confiding, till it expresses the near friendship of God, and his communion with the individual, human soul. The most secret and hidden faults of his friend are noticed by God, and he causes the silent suggestions of the heart to be received, as the discourse of a friend. Such is the beautiful economy of the Psalm,\* and the delightful instruction, which it contains. In didactick pieces of this sort generally, however, we are not to expect the same progressive action, as in the triumphal and warlike songs. Instruction loves a smooth area, and goes directly to its purpose. Finally, in the alphabetical Psalms we must look for no artificial structure in the logical connexion. They are a blooming cluster of choice sentences, and arranged with a view to the memory, and the facility of learning them. The long 119th Psalm treats for the most part, of only one leading sentiment, and is a collection of moral truths expressed with many variations. I must not here give many examples, since some have already been introduced, and most of them are familiar to the recollection even of children. It is, too, the most beautiful test of the didactick, that it is instructive to children.

#### A LYRICAL DIALOGUE ON DIVINE PROVIDENCE

##### THE 91ST PSALM,

1. He that dwelleth under the care of the most High,  
And abideth under the shadow of the Almighty,  
He saith to Jehovah, "Thou art my refuge,"  
My fortress, and my God, in thee will I trust."
2. He will deliver thee from the snares of death,

\* A ground of many misinterpretations of the Psalms, is the taking law, word, judgment, testimony in the modern, and not in the ancient political sense, which these words [conveyed to the minds of the Jews, To these refer, also, the duties and benefits, which the Psalms celebrate,

He will save the from the deadly pestilence.  
 He covereth thee with his feathers,  
 And under his wings dost thou trust,  
 His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

A thousand shall fall at thy side,  
 Ten thousand at thy right hand,  
 But it shall not come nigh thee.  
 With thine eyes shalt thou behold,  
 And see the reward of the wicked.

1. "In thee, O Jehovah! is my refuge."
2. "So shalt thou dwell securely and on high."  
 There shall no evil befall thee,  
 Nor any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

He giveth his servants charge for thee,  
 To keep thee in all thy ways.  
 They shall bear thee on their wings,  
 Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder,  
 And trample upon the young lion and the dragon.

"Because he trusted in me, I deliver him,  
 "I exalt him because he honoureth my name.

"When he calleth upon me, I will answer,

"When in trouble, I will be with him,

"I will deliver him, and honour him,

"With long life will I satisfy him,

"And will show him my salvation."

Can the providence of God be taught with a sense of more cordial trust, or with more tenderness of feeling? There is here no chorus, indeed, but the change of speakers produces the finest effect. It makes the whole a fatherly lesson, progressing and rising higher to the end, where the Supreme Father speaks and confirms his truth.

But enough of examples. In order to feel the beauty even of the finest Psalms, we must transport ourselves into the age, in which they were written, and return to its simplicity of feeling. As most of the Psalms are prayers, so that childlike submission of the heart is necessary to the proper use of them, which the Orientals require in their religious ceremonies.

nies and prayers, that silent admiration of God and his works, which sometimes rises into rapture, and sometimes sinks the mind to the deepest abasement. The song hurries from thought to thought, as from mountain to mountain. It touches the springs of emotion rapidly but deeply, and is fond of repeating the impression. It paints its objects only by rapid sketches. All lyric poetry, in which pastoral innocence and rural sentiments prevail, requires a calm and quiet mind; its beauties can produce no effect upon a sophisticated and scoffing one. As the heaven pictures itself only in the clear calm sea, so we see the gentle wave of emotion describe its circles only in the tranquil soul.

Here it would be unjustifiable to withhold in silence the name of the man, who first made us in Germany familiar with the genuine tones of the Hebrew Psalms. The most simple of the odes of Klopstock especially in detached parts, are tones from the harp of David. Many of his lyric pieces, and the most artless songs of his Messiah, have given to our language a simplicity and truth of lyric expression, which we should seek in vain from the most successful in this department of the neighbouring nations.



## X.

### CHARACTERS OF THE AUTHORS OF THE PSALMS.

- I. Of the character of David. The delicacy and sensibility of his mind in sorrow and joy. His confidence in God, and whence it originated. What class of readers consequently will be particularly fond of his Psalms. The straight forwardness and cordial sincerity, which characterise them. David's praise of Abner at his grave. His warm feelings excited by the persecution of his enemies. Passages in the Psalms relative to Divine retribution and justice. A peculiarity of David in promising songs to God, as the best offering, which he could bring. Of the passages, in which he speaks of the law of God, as the political constitution of the country. How we are to apply the characteristic sentiment of these Psalms.
- II. Of the character of Asaph. A theodicea respecting the fortune of the wicked. Prize songs on this subject by David and the sons of Korah.
- III. Songs of the sons of Korah. Earnest longing after Jerusalem, an affecting elegy.
- IV. Songs of anonymous authors. What the ascending songs or songs of degrees probably were. Examples and proofs from what is contained in them. General view of the whole book of Psalms.
- V. Of the musick of the Hebrews. Their various instruments of musick. Influence of the instrument upon the various songs. What is meant by the word *Selah*.

We have hitherto only surveyed the Psalms as it were externally, let us now look more nearly into the character of their authors.

#### I. CHARACTER OF DAVID AS A PSALMIST.

The leading trait of his character is truth. His songs are a faithful picture of his life, his feelings, and his age. Hence Luther called them, in his preface to the Psalms, a garden,

where all beautiful flowers and fruits flourish, but where also at times the most violent winds sweep over them. If his language were not in earnest, but only poetical colouring, we should have nothing to do but to praise his colours. Now we may derive instructions from his writings, by the picture which they present both of good and evil.\*

1. In David is manifested throughout a *tender heart*, and a *soul full of sensibility*. He exhausts the emotions and the language of joy and sorrow, and there are expressions of this sort in his Psalms, for which our language has almost nothing corresponding. This may be seen in the 22d, 38th, 39th, and many others. He is afflicted either by God or his enemies; (the later misfortunes of his reign he looked upon, as the chastisements of Jehovah) and how is his spirit bowed! How does his harp complain! He is dissolved with anguish and tears.

2. These tears are poured out to God, but soon change into *trust, courage, or childlike submission*. God had taken him from a keeper of sheep, and anointed him as the shepherd of his people, had delivered him from many dangers, and sustained him under many sufferings. All this inspires him with an individual, personal confidence in his most faithful and best friend, and this confidence is the theme of his songs. they utter the feelings of personal confidence and friendship in his communion with God,† and hence they have been so highly prized by all great and noble minds, who have placed a similar confidence in God. For all found in them the proper language of their own hearts, and could find no better expression of their feelings, than in the words of this ancient hero. Perhaps no one has exemplified this more strikingly than our own Luther, who found his whole heart in the book

\* For Proofs of his earnestness and sincerity see Ps. 5. 17. 26. 32. 34. 36. 63. &c.

† See Ps. 11. 18. 21. 27. 31. 40. &c.

of Psalms, and applied it to his own times, whenever and wherever he could do so. It is a great and good characteristic in a man to believe in a particular providence. All, who have been exposed to severe and numerous trials, and been proved upright, have had this faith. They knew God not from books, but from the truth of their own hearts, the experience of their own lives. No topic in relation to God is unfolded in the Psalms with a scientific or theoretical purpose. God is he, who every where looks through the soul of the Psalmist, knows the truth and uprightness of his heart, as well as his secret griefs and necessities. This occasions him joy and grief, inspires him with confidence and humility.

3. Thus his songs are the expression of the most inward and individual language of the heart. What to us seems boastful, when we repeat it coldly, and with but vague sympathy, was to him a feeling of reality in the particular circumstances, in which he was placed. His enemies calumniated and persecuted him, he on the contrary washed his hands in innocence; they were stained with no blood of his persecutors. This he represented to God in his songs.\* If we would deal justly with David, we should find the same gentleness and heartfelt sincerity also, as characteristics of his reign. His Joab was more harsh and violent than he; for even against his conquered foes he proceeded with all the magnanimity, which the times permitted, and against his domestic foes he wished never to be obliged to use severity. How was he afflicted at the death of Absalom! and how did he spare Shimei! Even Abner, the leader of the party opposed to him, and who had been craftily murdered, he honoured after his death with a song of lamentation for a virtuous hero.†

\* Ps. vii xxvi. &c. †2 Sam. iii, 33,

And David said to Joab,  
 And to all the people with him,  
 "Rend your garments,  
 And gird you with sackcloth,  
 And mourn for Abner."  
 And the king himself followed the bier,  
 And when they buried Abner,  
 He lifted up his voice,  
 And wept at Abner's grave,  
 And all the people with him.  
 The king lamented over Abner,  
 And said,  
 "Abner died not as a coward dieth!  
 Thy hands were not bound,  
 Nor thy feet put in fetters.  
 As one falleth before wicked men,  
 So fellest thou."  
 And all the people wept aloud.

The reign of the peaceful Solomon was in many respects far more severe and despotick, than that of the warlike and conquering David.

4. As a necessary consequence, therefore, since he was innocent and human, the persecution of his enemies was the more trying to his patience. The feelings, which it awakened, corroded his heart with anguish, and find an expression, even where it should not be the case, in general Psalms of praise or thanksgiving. Every one knows, how early misfortunes give a colouring to the objects, with which the feelings of the soul are connected. Early mischances, faithless friends, undeserved neglect at length render the heart cheerless, even if they do not embitter it. Most of David's Psalms, to which these remarks apply were composed in affliction, when his heart sought consolation in his harp, and we all know how freely the soul expresses itself under the first lively sense of unjust suffering. Though, therefore, I could wish for myself, and with reference to their present use, that the reference to his enemies were removed from some of his Psalms, as the

8th, 19th, 23d, 104th, and 139th, yet they belong properly to the picture of David's feelings, and mode of thought. He must have given an untrue expression of his soul, if he had not placed it before God in this, as in its other traits. Yet he does not by these expressions lay us under any obligation to adopt his imprecations at unfit times or without occasion. It must be admitted, that his imprecations upon his enemies, are not always in the spirit of the Christian religion.

These same trying circumstances gave David occasion to unfold the characters of the *retribution*, and *righteous judgment of God* as the feeling of his heart prompted him, and more fully than had been done in earlier times. In the conception of Moses, God was a national God, who exercised retributive justice over the whole nation in their general fortunes. David and his cotemporaries unfold still finer traits of the Divine government over individual men and over the world. Asaph does it as a teacher; David as an experienced hero; and many of their expressions are now, after the lapse of three thousand years, the most suitable for giving a moral view of God in his relation to the succession of events. In many of the Psalms it might appear, as if Job had been their model; but every thing throughout flows from its own proper and natural occasion.

5. It is a remarkable circumstance in regard to David, that he so often *promises his songs* as offerings to God, and considers them, instead of sacrifices and burnt offerings, of the greatest worth, and as vows of the sanctuary, best pleasing to God. These were the "calves of his lips," of which the Prophets, also speak, and may be explained from the character of David, and the age in which he lived. In our lips the words are often misapplied. With David the most appropriate and best offering, which he could make to God was his songs of praise. They were the flower of his strength and pertained to his highest glory. To offer bullocks from the stall would be far easier for a king, but he disdained to pre-

sent these cheaper offerings, and chose to honour God with the finest effusions of his poetical powers. But to whom among us will these passages of the Psalms be appropriated? Calves, bullocks, we should not offer to God, new and original songs we cannot offer, as David did; and from whom, moreover, does God require such poetical expressions of penitence? Thus these words are for us lifeless and unmeaning.

6. David reigned in a state, where the government was properly a theocracy, in which he stood in the place of God, and was under the necessity of governing himself in accordance with its ancient economy, the established constitution of the country. This gives to his songs throughout a spiritual character, even where he speaks of mere secular laws and regulations. He sat as a prince or vicegerent of God upon Mount Zion; in righteousness and judgment his priest, in victory his instrument, in the observance of the national laws his servant, no less than the lowest of his people. When, therefore, all the deeds and triumphs of David are ascribed to God, when the king rejoices in his God, boasts of his power, and swears new fidelity to his laws, all these expressions pertain, in fact, to the peculiar national language and relations. When he celebrates the wonders, i. e. the appropriate beauty and excellence of the Mosaic laws, and so often binds himself to rule in accordance with them, he was in so doing no indolent youth kneeling at his harp, as he is sometimes represented. Even in those Psalms, in which he speaks of his love to the law of God, he speaks also of his diligence in business, of his watchfulness of his own heart, that he might not become arbitrary and unbridled, in short, of his reverence for the laws and usages of his country. That he was bound to do so he felt very distinctly, but most deeply, when he had transgressed, and the chastisements of God were upon him. "I have sinned against Jehovah, my nation's God, but what have these sheep done?"

These few traits may serve to show, with what a free and

liberal spirit the Psalms of David must be used, if they are to be for us what they were for their author. Here, too, the rule of Young may be applied, that we often approach most nearly to the ancients, when we seem to be farthest removed from them. The flowers of general instruction and ornament may pass into our mind, and all the delicacies of language and style may also, become ours, if our hearts sympathize with the emotions, which they express. But all blind imitation is here, too, but a worshipping of Baal, and such expressions as *calves* of the lips are but unmeaning words.—Only then, do individual Psalms become favourites, when we find them, in particular situations of life, beautiful, elevated, and true, as the proper language of our own hearts, and learn to love the ancient harp of David, as anticipating or echoing the tones of sentiment in our own souls.

## II. CHARACTER OF ASAPH AS A PSALMIST.

In didactick Psalms Asaph excels David. His soul was less tender, but more calm and free from passion. The best of his Psalms are formed on a beautiful plan, and his national songs, also, are peculiarly excellent. In short, he merited the name of a Prophet, i. e. of one divinely inspired upon the harp. A single specimen of his didactick poetry must suffice.

### A VINDICATION OF GOD IN REGARD TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE WICKED.

#### THE 73d PSALM.

Yet, surely God is good to the upright,\*  
 To such as cleave to him with pure heart.  
 My feet indeed were almost gone,  
 My steps were already slipping,  
 For I was envious at the foolish,  
 And jealous of the prosperity of the wicked.

\* In many passages the word *Israel* is taken in a constructio pregnans and the notion of uprightness, contained in it is to be interpreted by itself.

No snare of death is spread for them,\*  
 But they are strong and firm.  
 They know not the troubles of life,  
 The scourge of misfortune reacheth them not,  
 Like other men.

Therefore their pride adorneth them with chains,  
 Their violence decketh them with rich attire,†  
 Their eyes look out from amidst fatness, ‡  
 Their devices flow forth from their hearts.

They scoff, they speak evil of a friend,||  
 They speak with arrogance.  
 They place their mouth, as Gods in the heavens,  
 And their tongue must be obeyed on earth.§

They satisfy their thirst from solid rocks,¶  
 They press from them abundant water,  
 And say, how ? doth God know this ?  
 Hath the Most High knowledge of us ?

These are the thoughts of the ungodly,

\* Death is here represented as a hunter, lurking about the paths of mortals. The persons spoken of here, have made a covenant with him, and a league with the grave, so that he spreads no nets for them.

† It is not said merely they are rich and proud, but oppression has given them the wealth of others.

‡ If any choose to read the text here with the LXX. I have no objection, but the other reading, also, gives an opposite image. Their eye looks forth proudly, and its visions must be accomplished, so too, the devices of their hearts.

|| See the other Psalms of Asaph. 1. 20.

§ Heavens and earth are here contrasted. They raise their heads even to the heavens, and their word goes forth over the earth, and is every where obeyed. Compare Ps. clxxviii. 15.

¶ Every one knows, that the two members of the common translations do not correspond. The second is clear, the fault must, therefore, be in the first. I divide the words differently, and there is not only sense and parallelism, but we see a paronomasia with the following words. It is an image of the severest oppression, and happily introduces what follows. The Masoretic text, also, indicates a defect here.



And these are they, that prosper in the world,\*  
And that increase in riches.

In vain, therefore, have I kept pure my heart,  
And washed my hands in innocence,  
For every day have I been scourged,  
And every morning chastened with affliction.†

I said, I will declare, how it is with it.  
“Lo! they are the generation of thy children.”

My word was false !—  
I thought to understand it  
But was in painful doubt,

Until I went into the councils of God,  
And then I understood their end.

On slippery places hast thou set them,  
And into deep abyasses are they falling.

How are they desolate in a moment,  
And utterly consumed with terrors ‡

As a dream when one awaketh,  
So, O Lord, hast thou awaked,||

And put to flight their empty image,

How was my heart distressed,  
My veins pierced through with pain,

That I, so foolish, knew it not,  
But was in judgment as a brute before thee.§

Now I cleave continually to thee.  
For thou didst hold me by my right hand.  
Guide me always, even as thou wilt,

\* The persons spoken of are those who live in abundance, the beati, fortunate men,

† Fortune changes every morning, brings every day some new calamity

‡ The words of the original present a very vivid image.

|| That the word means *in awaking*, not *in the city* appears from the context.

§ The sequel shows clearly enough, what is meant here. He was at first in respect to the purpose of God, as a brute, i. e. he understood nothing of his purpose, judged irrationally, and was disposed to break away from him and violate his faith. (See Ps. xxxii. 8.) Now he judges differently of God, and cleaves to him as the following verse represents it with a repetition of the word,

And then receive me with honour.

For whom have I in heaven but thee,  
And whom on earth do I desire beside thee ?  
My flesh and heart are wasted away,  
But thou art the strength of my heart,  
Thou art my portion, O God, forever.

They that are far from thee shall perish.  
Thou destroyest all, that fall away from thee,  
But good for me is drawing near to God.  
In God Jehovah have I put my trust,  
Still will I sing of all thy works.

How beautiful are the sentiments of this Psalm ! It begins with a brief moral sentiment,\* the result of many reflections, with which it also closes. Soon and imperceptibly he comes to his situation of trial,† describes how he fell into error, and, when he has placed this picture in the clearest light, makes another transition.‡ He is brought into the counsels of Divine providence, and sees that in his former opinion he was brutish. New vows of fidelity to God (having reference to his former wavering) are uttered with the greatest fervour,|| till a general moral sentiment again closes the Psalm.§ Both in its sentiments and its arrangement it is a beautiful didactic Psalm.

We must not extend his views beyond their proper bounds. Asaph saw the prosperity of the wicked, and saw it vanish away, while the happiness of the upright is true and abiding—this is the extent of his view. Neither future retribution of the former, nor an exposition of the eternal blessings of the latter, was the purpose of his ode.

If I mistake not, there is in several Psalms a noble competition in the treatment of the subject presented in the above. We have already contemplated one Psalm containing similar views.¶ It treated the subject as a dark enigma, in a lyric

\* V. 1.

† V. 2. 3.

‡ V. 12—16.

|| V. 23—26.

§ V. 27—28.

¶ Vol. I. p. 180.

and beautiful style, like all the Psalms of the sons of Korah. Here is the rival song of David on the same theme.

### THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED.

#### THE 39TH PSALM.

I said, I will be watchful all my life,  
That I may guard my tongue from sin.  
I will restrain my mouth in silence,  
While wicked men are present with me.  
I kept silence, and ceased also from joy,\*  
My sorrow was excited in me,  
My heart was glowing in my bosom,  
While I was musing the fire burned,  
And—then I spake with my tongue.

Jehovah, make me know mine end,  
How short my life is,  
That I may know how frail I am.  
Behold, my life is but a hand-breadth,  
And all my time as nothing before thee.  
The life of man is but an empty shadow,  
That thinks itself enduring.†

Yea, man goeth forth a shadowy image,  
Yea, he disquieteth himself in vain,  
He gathereth and knoweth not for whom.

On what then do I place my hope ?  
In thee, O Lord, is all my hope,  
Deliver me from my transgressions,  
And make me not the sport of fools.  
So will I keep silence, and open not my mouth,  
For thou wilt do all things well.‡

Remove thy stroke away from me,  
I faint from the blow of thine hand.  
For when thou dost rebuke severely  
Even the strong man for his iniquity,

\* How refined and yet how true ! We cannot repress and break off our anxious thoughts by concealing them. They must find vent ; they must be freely unfolded, or they corrode the heart still more bitterly.

† The expression in the original is concise and beautiful.

‡ Thou wilt accomplish it better than I can prescribe.

His beauty is consumed as by the moth,  
Yea, man is altogether vanity.

Hear then my prayer, Jehovah,  
Give ear unto my supplication.  
Be not silent, when I weep before thee.  
I am here a stranger with thee,  
A wanderer, as all my fathers were.  
O spare me, that I may recover strength,  
Before I go hence, and be no more.

A song of tenderness, composed perhaps during sickness, and wholly in David's style, abounding in fine personal feeling. One, who is fond of this, will prefer the song of David, those, who seek instruction, the psalm of Asaph, and those, who delight in lyrical invention, the ode of the sons of Korah, which, in depicting the fate of the wicked, ventures into the realms of death. David has another instructive psalm (Ps. 37.) on the same subject. There are several similar lyrical competitions in the psalms, especially in the national songs. (Com. Ps. 46 and 76. 80. 85. 44. 78. &c.) To compare them together is a very pleasing task, which illustrates the characters of the writers, as well as their peculiar styles of composition.

### III. SONGS OF THE SONS OF KORAH.

Were these songs written by David? If so, why was not his name attached to them? since to him, as well as to Asaph, other songs are ascribed, which probably belong to later times. Perhaps they may have been from one of Heman's choir—and their author may not unjustly be esteemed the most elevated and truly lyric poet of all in the collection. His national songs are brief, full and animated. The 45th Psalm is one of the most beautiful bridal songs, the 42d one of the finest elegies—The latter is inserted here as an example.

## LONGING AFTER JERUSALEM.

## THE 42. 43. PSALM.

As the hart panteth after fountains of water,  
 So panteth my soul after thee, O God.  
 My soul thirsteth for God, the living God,\*  
 When shall I come, and see the face of God!  
 My tears were long my meat day and night,  
 While day by day they said to me,  
 Where now is God, thy helper.  
 I thought thereon; (and poured forth my tears)  
 As I went with many to the house of God,  
 With joy and praise in a rejoicing throng.

*Why art thou cast down, O my soul,  
 And why art thou disquieted within me?  
 Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him,  
 Him, my deliverer and my God.*

And yet, O God, my soul is grieved,  
 Therefore will I remember thee,  
 Here amidst mountains and streams,  
 By Jordan, and the hills of Libanus.

As there wave rusheth upon wave,  
 They rush upon me like thy billows,  
 For all thy waves and rivers  
 Have gone over me.

And yet the goodness of Jehovah  
 Upholdeth me by day,  
 And in the night his song is with me,  
 Even prayer to my God, the living God.

I sing to God my rock,  
 Wherefore dost thou forget me,  
 Wherefore go I mourning,  
 For the oppression of my enemies?

It pierceth through my bones,  
 When my enemies reproach me,  
 While day by day they say to me,  
 Where now is God, thy helper?

\*The living God is contrasted with lifeless idols. Here too it has a beautiful allusion to the living fountains above.

Deliver me, O Jehovah from slanderous lips,  
And free me from a deceitful tongue.

What doth it to thee, the deceitful tongue ?  
What doth it to thee ?

It pierceth as sharp arrows of the warrior,  
It burneth like coals of pointed wood.

Alas that I dwell in robbers tents,\*

And dwell as with Arabian savages.

Too long have I dwelt with men,

Who are enemies of peace.

I am for peace, but when I speak,

They are for war.

The speaker is a sojourner, who complains of the intolerable disposition of his companions. He dwells in tents, and compares those around him to Arabian robbers. He wishes the time, which he is to spend with them, were at an end, and this is all we learn from the text of the Psalm.

Were these tents moving toward Jerusalem? Did they encamp without the city, as they often must do, during the national festival. These questions are more easily asked than answered.

The 121st Psalm explains itself more fully. There is nothing in it of Babylon, but it exhibits a march towards Jerusalem and the holy mountains.

## A SONG OF GRATULATION IN GOING

### TOWARD JERUSALEM

#### THE 121ST PSALM.

I lift my eyes, and look to the hills,

From which cometh my help.

My help cometh from Jehovah,

\* The word means a skin, a rude tent covering, from which a wild race, living intents perhaps, had their name. The complainer therefore says "it is with him, as if he lived with wild savages" The Israelites saunter. They are used here in the parallelism shows.

Who made the heavens and the earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to slide,  
He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold he, that keepeth Israel,  
Will neither slumber nor sleep.

Jehovah will be thy keeper,  
Jehovah will be thy shade,  
Who goeth (as a friend) at thy side,  
That the sun smite thee not by day,  
Nor the moon afflict thee by night.

The Lord preserve thee from evil,  
The Lord preserve thy soul.  
The Lord shall guard thy going out,  
And thy coming in now, and forevermore.

Let us conceive a young Israelite, who like a new fledged bird looks toward the mountains, in which his confidence is placed, who eagerly desires to proceed upon the journey, and to see Jerusalem, and whose aged father bestows these blessings on him as he departs, and so it will be word for word explained. It is no going up from Babylon, for who there should bestow such blessings? It is the voice of a tender farewell, which cannot find a last word, and satisfy itself with the bestowment of blessings. The song might also be sung on the way by individuals or in choirs. They congratulated each other on their journey.

That the 122d Psalm expresses the desires of a young Israelite, who has already been once at Jerusalem, and is now rejoicing at the annunciation of another journey, has been already remarked. The 123d, 125th, 134th plainly show, that they belong also to the same class. The 124th, 129th are songs of thanksgiving for the deliverance of Israel, such as were sung at national festivals, and such as we find among the songs of Asaph, and the sons of Korah.\* The 126th is of the same kind, probably composed during the captivity, and afterwards retained as a national song, as a memorial of confidence and joy. The 133d praises the unity of tribes

and families, the 128th the happiness of domestic life, the 127th the blessing of a numerous family, though their education requires toil and care—all of them the finest subjects for an assembled people. Would that we had many such adapted to our customs and modes of life, as pure, as concise, as full of the spirit of song, as these were for the people of Israel. The 130th is a confession of sin, a preparation for religious sacrifice, when one felt himself oppressed with a sense of guilt. The 132d commends to God the family of the king, Zion, the priests, and was thus destined for the same occasions. Finally these fifteen beautiful songs were followed by songs of praise, which were obviously designed for the temple and the public festivals.\*

If we look over the book of Psalms in this way, we may easily arrange it for ourselves, especially if we take the Jewish division into five books to aid us. The national psalms stand, for the most part, between the others, not each by itself, but in small collections. Here is a brief view of the arrangement.

Ps. 1. The preface or introduction to the book.

Ps. 2. A royal Psalm, the crown of the book.

Ps. 3—40 Mostly Psalms having personal reference to David. These include the first book according to the Jewish division.

Ps. 41—49. Songs of the sons of Korah, composed on a variety of subjects. Most of them are national songs, and the 50th, the beautiful didactic psalm of Asaph, closes the first collection of Korahite songs.

Ps. 51—64. Songs having personal relation to David.

Ps. 65—68. National psalms, perhaps also those that follow, till the 72d on the reign of Solomon closes the second book.

Ps. 70—83. Songs of the Korahites and other writers, the

\* The book of Psalms was probably composed of distinct smaller collections, and these belonged to one, which had been called the book of travelling songs, the songs of ascent.



greater part of them national. Here closes the third book, which was wholly from poets connected with the temple musick, and probably was at a later period appended to the Psalms of David, which closed with the second book.

Ps. 90. The song of Moses. Ps. 91—107 and to the end of the book psalms of plain and general import; plainly a contribution from the temple, and for the use of the national festivals. The fifth book is the latest, and most miscellaneous collection.

Ps. 108—110 Songs of David, or having reference to him. Ps. 111—118 Psalms for the temple and festivals. The 119 a collection of moral precepts. Ps. 120—134 the songs of degrees, which are closed with songs of praise, and Ps. 138—145 Psalms of David, which are also closed with songs of praise. We see how they all fall into groups, and an editor, who treated the Psalms merely as songs, could by arranging them in this way aid the clearness of our view, and facilitate the memory of them.

## V. OF THE MUSICK OF THE PSALMS

Notwithstanding the elaborate treatises we have on this subject, we obtain few results from them in regard to the poetry and economy of the Psalms. Nothing is so difficult to be transmitted from one age, and the customs of one period and country to another, as language and musick. They float upon the air, and are fleeting as the breeze. The ancient and modern musick, the musick of the East and of the West, are so different from each other, that, even if we knew more of them there would be found but little, which our ears would relish. I remark only briefly.

1. The instruments, which are named in the Psalms, are either ruling, or only accompanying instruments. The accompanying are obviously the common ones, which therefore do not occur in any of the inscriptions. They belong to the

full chorus of joyful exclamation and praise, and to the songs of the temple. Since the people remained only in the outer court, and the music sounded to them from the temple, or under the open sky, the multitude of singers and plain instruments is readily accounted for. To this class belong the castanets, the adufa, many kinds of trumpets and flutes. It was a kind of military musick, because the God of Zion was a Lord of Sabaoth i. e. of warlike hosts, and to this character the sentiments of many psalms have an obvious reference. When it is said, that Asaph struck the castanets, this is not named as his only instrument, but with this he led the choir, he beat the time. In some songs also he prophesied, i. e. employed his inventive power, as a poet with the accompaniment of his musick.

2. The softer musick, accompanying the language of poetry, was formed by single instruments; hence one song is referred to the flute, one to the guitar and harp, another to the horn, &c. It would seem, that the ancients, with whom poetry and musick were intimately associated, attached more importance, than the moderns, to giving every instrument its peculiar effect, and even designating by it the character of the poetry; for it needs no proof to show, that each instrument with its peculiar tone has also, as it were, a peculiar sphere of emotion, in which it is fitted to produce its effect. Hence we have striking examples of what effects certain tones on this or that instrument, which were the favourite airs of an individual hearer, have produced on him. As all the power of musick rests upon its simplicity, the artist with the simple tones of his instrument has the heart of one, with whom it is a favourite, in his power, and plays as it were immediately upon it. In the mean time the harmonious uproar of all instruments, the artificial swell of sound, that reaches the clouds, may indeed enrapture the ear of a connoisseur, but becomes a real Babel to the feelings of one, who wishes only to have his feelings affected. Should the

sisters, who have been separated by art, musick and poetry, once become again more intimately united, we should again hear of "a song for the harp," and "a song for the flute," as in the songs of Asaph and David. By the study of a single instrument we learn the kind of passion, which it awakens, and to distinguish more deeply the tone of feeling, which it excites in the heart; and he, that can happily express this in the language of lyric poetry, will accomplish more than can be done by all the rules of the critical art.

3. Since antiquity and the East, even now, have known nothing of our artificial harmony, since the poetry of the Psalms has only a very free arrangement of metre, and little or no regular scansion according to our method, all attempts to model our language by that, or that by ours, are in vain. Free and indeterminate metrical movements float in the air. Melody and the controlling influence of feeling determine their rythmical balance only in a very general manner. This is shown in the Psalms by the so frequently occurring "Selah." If we compare the most decisive passages, they are found to correspond neither with pauses, nor the *da capo*, nor *intermezzo*, but must mean *change of tone*, which is expressed either by increase of force, or by a transition into another time and mode.\* The subject of the song, or its tone of emotion change, and since the melody was not very definitely marked for the singer and the musical composer, a *nota bene* was attached to the most important passages in the book of Psalms. Songs, which are impassioned in their character, most commonly have it, especially where the subject is changed. In uniformly didactic Psalms and those of loftier tone, which are still uniform, it does not occur. Where

\* From all books of travels we know, that the Orientals are fond of a very uniform, and, as it appears to the Europeans, a very doleful sort of musick, but that in certain places they suddenly change the time, and pass into a different melody. This it probably was, which in the Psalms is designated by "Selah."

it stands at the end, it may show, that they were accustomed to sing another continuously after it, as it is undeniable, that they were fond of thus linking together and associating several different psalms.\* The Greeks translate "Selah by *διαψαλμα*, which Suidas and others explain by *μελωδίας ἐναλλαγῇ*, concentus mutatio. It shows therefore, that such songs were set to musick throughout, only however after the very simple method of the Orientals, which varied with the change in the song which it accompanied. On the whole we find that we have indeed the words of these ancient songs, but that especially in our imitations the living spirit, which depends upon the recital, is far from being attained.

## A SONG OF PRAISE

TO GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUS PROVIDENCE.

THE 92<sup>D</sup> PSALM. †

A SONG FOR THE SABBATH DAY.

It is good to give thanks to Jehovah,  
To sing praises to thy name, O Most High.  
To show thy loving kindness in the morning,  
Thy faithfulness every night,  
Upon the ten-stringed harp, and the lute,  
The guitar of the sounding strings.

Thou, O Jehovah, hast rejoiced me with thy work,  
I will triumph in the work of thy hands,  
How great, O Lord, are thy works!  
How unfathomable thy counsels!  
The brutish man understandeth it not,  
Neither doth the fool comprehend it.

When the wicked spring up, as the grass,  
And all the workers of iniquity flourish,

\* 1 Chron. 16 is made up of parts from four different psalms. Ps. xxxii. xxxiii. were probably also sung together, and so of others.

† Probably this Psalm, the author of which is unknown, was designed to be sung by the Levites on the Sabbath, and in the temple,

They yet shall perish at the last.  
 But thou, O Jehovah, abidest  
 The Most High, forevermore.  
 Behold, O Jehovah, thine enemies,  
 Behold thine enemies shall perish,  
 All the evil-doers shall be scattered,  
 But my horn shalt thou exalt,  
 As the horn of a wild bullock, \*  
 And I shall be anointed with pure oil.

Mine eye looks with courage on my foes,  
 Mine ear receives the tidings of evil,  
 To the wicked, that rise up against me.  
 The righteous flourish like the palm tree,  
 And grow up like the cedar of Lebanon.  
 Those that are planted in the house of the Lord,  
 Flourish in the courts of our God.  
 They still shoot forth in old age,  
 They are full of sap, and their leaf green,  
 To show that Jehovah is upright,  
 And there is no unrighteousness in him.

\* That is, thou dost raise my courage, and increase my strength. The wild ox is superior to other animals, by the magnitude and elevation of his horn. Hence, his horn is often mentioned, as the symbol of strength and superiority of power. So Moses speaks of Joseph. Deut. xxxiii. 17.

## XI.

### PSALMS RELATING TO THE KING.

The Psalms considered in certain national points of view. Of God as a judge and national God in the temple. Intimations and expressions of the Psalms on this point. Of songs of triumph over other nations in a religious tone. Examples of this. Peaceful and religious scenes in Psalms of a warlike character. Examples. Of the king as a representative of Jehovah in a theocratic government. The second Psalm accompanied with remarks. Of the king as covenanted with Jehovah, who dwelt near him. The 110th Psalm, with remarks. Of the promises respecting the lineage of David. Their influence on the Psalms. The last Psalm of David. The times of Solomon, a Psalm. Celebration of Mount Zion in the Psalms and Prophets.

I am very well aware, that I have by no means exhausted the internal character of the Psalms. But in order to do so an extended investigation of the subject matter, of which they treat, would be requisite, and for that, I have no room in the present work. The finest sayings respecting God, his attributes and works, his government and retributive justice, the protection, which he extends to the good, the worth of prayer, and of uprightness in his sight, are so well known to us through the Psalms and the applications made of them, that a collection of them seems unnecessary. I venture, therefore, only to indicate *certain leading points of view*, which exhibit the subject matter of some of the Psalms, in its proper *relation to the age*, in which they were composed.

1. Elevated and sublime, as are the expressions concerning God, which occur in the Psalms, we must yet bear in mind,

that, especially in those of the age of David, Jehovah is still represented peculiarly as a *national God*, who was worshipped as the king and judge of the land in his temple. This view of the subject gives as much of force to the songs in general, as positive meaning to particular expressions. David contemplated God as the private friend of his person, and his individual fortunes; but in the temple he approached with his confessions and songs, as into the presence of his *judge*. Hence we are to explain the account of his sins, as infirmities or as transgressions, because both were matters to be spoken of in the temple. Hence he ventured to speak with such confidence of his blamelessness in regard to his enemies, because he was here standing before his judge. So in many of the Psalms.\*

Hear, O Jehovah, the righteous, attend to my cry,  
 Hear my prayer, that goeth from pure lips,  
 Before thy presence I seek for my right,  
 Thine eyes behold the things, that are equal.  
 Thou provest my heart, searchest it by night,  
 Thou triest me, and findest no evil in me.  
 For I purposed, that my mouth should not transgress,  
 When I gave sentence in thy stead,  
 In all things I guarded my lips  
 From uttering an injurious word.†  
 I called upon thee, and thou heardst me,  
 So now also incline thine ear and hear,  
 As for me in my innocency  
 I shall behold the face of my judge,

\* Ps. xvii.

† This seems to me, the sense of the words, "to the works of of men, (my subjects) by the word of thy lips, (the judgments and ordinances, which I gave as king in the name of God) I guarded myself from going in the way of violent men, (arbitrary, oppressive tyrants,)" The suppliant expects justice from God, since he has not knowingly said or done evil to any.

My wishes will be satisfied,  
When thine image awakes.\*

That is, so soon as he shows himself in the character of judge, all these expressions and intimations are judicial. In the East the judge was approached in plain terms, and with a loud cry of complaint, and when he showed himself, when his "likeness" awoke publicly, or he appeared in publick for the administration of justice, he was the helper of the oppressed. Thus it is said, ,

Let thy face shine upon us,  
And we shall be saved.  
Thou saidst, Lord ; ye shall seek my face,  
I seek it Lord, hide it not from me.

So many other forms of expression in these publick national prayers and lamentations before their God.

2. When, therefore, in triumphal and national songs, also, Jehovah is placed in opposition to the gods of other nations, it is for the most part in this *special*, national sense.†

Not unto us, O Jehovah, not unto us,  
To thy name alone be the glory,  
For thy mercy and thy truths sake.  
Let the nations say, "Where is now your God ?  
Our God is in the heavens,  
And doeth whatsoever he will.  
But their idols, silver and gold,  
Are the work of men's hands.  
They have mouths, and speak not,  
They have eyes, and see not,  
They have ears, and hear not,  
They have noses, and smell not,  
They have hands, and handle not,  
They have feet, and walk not,

\* The context and parallelism require, that the "awaking of the likeness" be preferred to God, and correspond with "face."

† Ps. cxv.



Nor do they speak through their throat.

Like them are they that made them;  
And every one, that trusteth in them.

O Israel, trust thou in Jehovah,  
He is your help, and your shield,  
O house of Aaron, trust in Jehovah,  
He is your help, and your shield.  
Ye, that fear Jehovah, trust in him,  
He is your help, and your shield.

If we take from these Psalms the peculiar national feeling, which accompanied them, we deprive them of a great part of their force, and of their original import.

In Judah God is known,\*  
His name is great in Israel,  
In Salem is his tabernacle,  
And his dwelling place in Zion.  
There brake he the arrows of the bow,  
The shield, and sword, and battle. (Change of tone.)

Glorious art thou, O mountain,  
Mightier than the mountains of prey,  
They stand despoiled of themselves,  
Even the brave ! they have slept their sleep,  
And none of the men of might find their hands.  
At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,  
The rider and horse are in a dead sleep.

How terrible art thou !  
Who can stand in thy sight,  
Before the breath of thy fury ?  
Thou didst thunder judgment from heaven,  
The earth feared, and was silent.  
When thou didst arise to judgment,  
To save the oppressed of the earth. (Change of tone.)

The wrath of man giveth thee but praise,  
The remainder of it thou girdest to thee,  
As the symbol of thy triumph.  
Make thy vows, and bring triumphal gifts  
To Jehovah your God,

All ye borders of the land,  
 Bring your triumphal gifts  
 To him that is to be feared.  
 He bindeth the pride of heroes,  
 He is terrible to the kings of the earth.

We know not what event this triumphal song celebrates ; but every trait is as strictly national, as Salem, Zion, and Jehovah were peculiar to the Hebrews. In our warlike and triumphal songs the most apposite expressions of this sort from the Psalms are but withered laurels.

### A MORNING SONG OF DAVID.

#### PSALM 108.

O God, my heart is ready,  
 I will sing and give praise.  
 Awake, my soul, awake,  
 Psaltery and harp,  
 I will awake early,  
 I will praise thee, O Lord ;  
 I will sing praises to thee  
 Before the people and nation.  
 For thy goodness is great,  
 It reacheth above the heavens.\*  
 Thy covenanted truth O Lord,  
 Reacheth above the clouds.  
 Exalt thyself, O God, above the heavens,  
 That thy glory may cover the earth.†  
 Deliver thou thy beloved,  
 Save with thy right hand, and hear.  
 God heard, and spake in his sanctuary, †  
 Therefore will I rejoice.  
 For already I divide Shechem as mine,

\* In allusion to the morning sky rising and freeing itself from clouds.

† An allusion to the morning light.

‡ A common expression of the favour of Jehovah. (See Ps. lxxxv. 9.)  
 The following words are not spoken by God, but by David.

And measure out the vale of Succoth.\*

Gilead is mine, Manassah is mine,  
Ephraim my helmet, Judah the leader in war.  
Moab is my wash-pot,†  
Upon Edom I cast my shoe,  
And treat the Philistines with scorn.

Who brought us into the strong city?  
Who guided us into Edom?  
Was it not thou, O God, who also didst cast us off,  
And didst not go forth with our armies.

Help us again in our necessities,  
For vain is the help of man.

Through God we yet shall do valiantly,  
He treadeth the enemy under our feet.

I know no people, in whose war-songs were mingled thoughts so gentle as we find here. The most feeling prayer and lamentation may be nearly connected with feelings of the greatest bravery and warlike sternness. It was obviously the refined moral regulations of Moses, which gave even to the war-songs of so early an age this milder and gentler tone. The severity found in them belongs to the age, the tenderness and refinement is the effect of their religion.

3. Hence, we see, also, that passages of the greatest sensibility, relating to domestick happiness, are mingled with warlike descriptions, and frequently from the most heroick sentiments there is a transition to the tone of elegy. The former circumstance happens sometimes from the union of several distinct Psalms, as in the 144th. The first eight verses are a distinct Psalm, and with the 9th a new one begins, which

\*These are not conquered countries, but the property of David as king. He begins with a glad heart to enumerate the blessings of the inheritance, which God had given him. He names first, Shechem, and the valley of Succoth, because these were the residence of Jacob, and therefore the most ancient inheritance of the Jews, by right of the patriarch.

† Here begins the enumeration of his conquests and victories.

again from speaking of enemies turns suddenly to the prosperity of Judæa.

That our sons, like vigorous trees,  
 May grow up in the beauty of youth ;  
 And our daughters, as beautiful pillars,  
 Polished like statues in the palace ;  
 That our garners may be full,  
 Yielding all manner of store,  
 Our sheep bring forth thousands,  
 Yea ten thousands in our valleys ;  
 Our oxen be strong, and no lamentation,  
 No damage, or loss in our fields.  
 Happy the nation, that is thus,  
 Happy the nation, whose God is Jehovah.

In the 65th Psalm is a similar transition from war-like to rural thoughts. How beautiful is the image, when the shepherd of Israel, who is invoked for purposes of war, feeds his people as a shepherd.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
 That leadest Joseph like a flock.  
 Thou, that art throned above the cherubim,  
 Let the light of thy countenance shine.  
 Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manassah,  
 Awake thy strength, and come and save us.  
*Revive us again O God,*  
*Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved,*  
 Jehovah, God of Sabaoth,  
 How long art thou angry amid the prayers of thy people ?  
 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears,  
 And givest tears for drink in a full cup.  
 Thou has made us a reproach to our neighbours,  
 A scoffing to our enemies round about.  
*Revive us again, O God of Sabaoth,*  
*Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.*  
 Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt,  
 Thou didst cast out the nations and plant it,  
 Give it room and cause it to take root,

That it filled the land.  
 Its shadow covered the hills around,  
 And cedars of God were its boughs,  
 Thou sentest its branches to the sea,  
 Its runners even to the Euphrates.  
 Why then dost thou break down its walls,  
 So that all, who pass by, despoil it?  
 The boar from the wood doth waste it,  
 The wild beast doth devour it.  
 O God of Sabaoth, return to us again,  
 Look down from heaven and behold,  
 And visit again thy vine,  
 Which thy right hand hath planted  
 It is burned with fire, it is cut down,  
 It is withered at the breath of thine anger.  
 Let thy hand be upon our leader,  
 Thy right hand upon him, whom thou hast made strong;  
 So shall we never revolt from thee,  
 Revive us, and we will rejoice in thee.  
*Jehovah, God of Sabaoth,*  
*Revive us again,*  
*Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.*

This beautiful elegy, with its recurring chorus, is wholly theocratic. It rests on the history of the nation, and only toward the end (v. 18.) do we discover the continuous allegory of the man and hero, who is now to act in the name of Jehovah.

4. As Israel was a theocratic state, and every hero and ruler acted in the place of Jehovah, so the language, when these are spoken of, has a peculiar loftiness and solemn dignity. Even in the historical style it could be said, in the form of expression which they admitted, *that he was seated on the throne of Jehovah*,\* and in poetry, that he was a son of God, that is, his representative on earth. Every one knows the various uses of the word *son* in the Hebrew language. The

\*1 Chron. xxix, 23. His kingdom is called the kingdom of Jehovah. 1 Chron. xxviii. 5.

connexion of simple domestic relations with ancient government and cultivation rendered it a favourite expression. In calling kings the sons of God\* it employs a form of expression common to all ancient languages, and other Oriental nations have gone still farther in a thousand titles and names.† In such passages as the following therefore the meaning is plain.‡

I have found David my servant,  
 I have anointed him with my holy oil.  
 With him shall my hand be mighty,  
 Him also shall mine arm strengthen,  
 That no enemy may terrify him.  
 I will beat down his foes before him,  
 And will smite those that hate him.  
 My truth and mercy shall be with him,  
 And in my name shall his horn be exalted,  
 That his hand may be stretched to the sea,  
 His right hand to the river Euphrates.  
*He shall say to me, thou art my father,  
 My God and the rock of my salvation.  
 I make him also my first born,  
 Exalted above all the kings of the earth.*

The last lines explain the expression *son of Jehovah, first born of Jehovah*, so clearly, that I venture to add here the 2d Psalm, as of the same character, and authentically elucidated by this song of Heman.

#### THE 2d PSALM.

What tumult reigns among the nations!

\* The *διογενεις* of Homer are known to every one,

† They call themselves sons of heaven, of the sun, the moon, &c.

‡ Ps. lxxxix. 20.

Why do they clamour with empty noise ?\*  
 The kings of the earth rise up,  
 The princes build projects togethert  
 Against Jehovah and his anointed.†  
 "Let us brake their bands asunder,  
 "And cast away their fetters from us."  
 He, that is throned in heaven, shall laugh,  
 Jehovah holdeth them in derision.  
 He speaketh to them in his wrath,  
 And scattereth them in his fierce anger. ||  
 "I have set my king upon my throne,  
 Upon my holy mountain Zion."§  
 I will also declare the divine decree,¶  
 Jehovah said unto me,  
 "Thou art my son,  
 "So be it from this day forth,"\*\*  
 Ask of me,  
 And nations shall be thine inheritance,

\* I adhere to the simplicity of the ancient versions, which translate here "empty, vain," the usual sense of the word. The verb also corresponds well with this, and signifies the empty uproar of a multitude. The poet has here in a single word imaged the import of the whole ode, which only unfolds this lofty sentiment with which it begins.

† I have preserved the metaphor of the original, which is here indeed only an incidental import of the word, because the idea of the whole ode has a resemblance to the history in Gen. xi.

‡ Jehovah and his earthly *representative* stand side by side, and as one person throughout. The latter is here only *in the name* of the former, and has his dignity from him.

|| He speaks to them in the thunder, and with lightning disperses them. The parallelism finely expresses the image, and the words of the following verses are the brief and sublime sentence of Jehovah, uttered in the thunder.

§ I follow the Hebrew text here in using the first instead of the third person, and consider God as the speaker in the two last lines, as the whole context and other parallel passages show to have been intended.

¶ Properly the law of the realm, the new constitution of the government. Henceforth God will reign through him, as his representative.

\*\* These two lines are parallel, the sense of the latter the same as that of the former. The same parallelism occurs Is. ix, 6. and in Acts xiii, 34. the passage is applied to a new king.

The uttermost parts of the earth thy possession,\*  
 Thou shalt smite them with an iron sceptre,  
 And dash them as a potters vessel.

Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings,  
 Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.  
 Obey Jehovah with fear,†  
 And honour him with trembling.  
 Do homage to the son, lest he be angry,  
 And bring destruction on you by the way,‡  
 For soon his wrath will be kindled,  
 And happy they, who are faithful to him.¶

Every one may observe here the beautiful lyrical progress of the Psalm. It begins boldly and abruptly with "a quo ? quo scelesti ruitis?" and sketches in few words the whole picture of their tumult, their conspiracy, their vain undertaking. A glance from heaven, a smile of scorn from the king of heaven renders all their counsels vain. He speaks to them in thunders, and one lightning flash drives them asunder. The poet hears and interprets the voice. It was brief and majestic, such as only he might utter, who is throned in heaven. The king upon earth distinctly explains his ordinances. He gives them counsel and instruction, but little time for deliberation, and closes with a sentiment addressed to the faithful of the land.

\* I leave to the Psalm here its loftiness of expression, the kings, the boundaries, the judges of *the earth*, as belonging to the age. The Psalmist did not consider geographically the relative magnitude of Judæa. It was to him simply the central point, where God reigned as king.

† I take the expression literally as meaning *circuire*. The vassals of Oriental kings stood in a circle around the throne, and going round the altar was a common act of religious worship.

‡ As much as to say, you have no time to deliberate. The image is taken from the caravans, which perish by the simoom.

¶ *Trust, faith*, in the Psalms often mean fidelity, as of subjects to their sovereign.



But to whom does it relate? For whom was a picture so animated originally designed? I know not, if we would judge of it, uninfluenced by foreign impressions, for what other person it could have been originally composed, than for David, Who dwelt upon Mount Zion at the time of its composition? Whom did God set as his son and representative upon this mountain according to other Psalms of plain import? Who had as many enemies as he, both in and out of Judæa? And who triumphed so gloriously over all these enemies? Half the Psalms are full of this subject, and yet, in regard to this, we proceed as if we had read nothing of it. All the expressions, which occur here, are elsewhere also applied to David, and the whole view presented by the ode is obviously correspondent, both in place and time, to the purpose for which it was composed. The nations marshal themselves for war. They are terrified, and proclamation made to them, with brief space allowed to deliberate—who does not see, that the bow is drawn for aiming at a present object. Place the object aimed at the distance of a thousand years, and the arrow flies in vain. The finest lyrical construction of a most impressive ode is lost, we deprive it of its local nation and origin, of its peculiar purpose and meaning.

“But the Psalm is introduced in the New Testament.” Yes! as a *Psalm for the king*, and with reference to *Him*, who sat and was forever to sit upon *the throne of David*. Must we not, therefore, know how David was enthroned there? And can we learn this otherwise than from the circumstances of his age, the representations of his own songs? The *application* of it in the New Testament so far from excluding, confirms rather its original meaning as descriptive of David.

5. As David, therefore, was enthroned upon the same holy mountain with God, that is, upon a mount of kingly majesty in his place, and on his throne, so expressions came into use, which celebrate him, as the *covenanted ally* and *friend of*

God. He had brought Jehovah upon mount Zion, and sworn allegiance to the mighty one of Jacob. \*

I will not enter the tabernacle of my house,  
 Nor go up upon my bed of rest,  
 I will give no sleep to mine eyes,  
 Nor slumber to mine eyelids,  
 Till I find a resting place for Jehovah,  
 A habitation for the mighty one of Jacob.  
 Lo we heard of it in Ephrata,  
 We found it in the wild fields of Jaar;  
 Let us enter I said into his tabernacle,  
 Let us worship at his footstool.  
 Arise Jehovah, come to thy rest,  
 Thou, and the ark of thy heroism.  
 Thy priests shall be clothed with judgment,  
 Thy saints shall shout for joy.

David performed this vow, and we know how richly God requited him. He gave him rest from his enemies, promised him a perpetual lineage, and continued blessings. The king places himself with humility *before the face of God*, and renders his thanksgivings, while he sits crowned with victory, *in his house*, upon the holy mount. All these expressions belong to historical narrative,† and the original local import of the following Psalm, therefore, would seem also to be placed beyond question.

#### THE 110th PSALM.

Jehovah said to the king,  
 Sit thou upon my right hand,‡  
 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.  
 From Zion now Jehovah reaches forth

\* Ps. cxxii.

† 2 Sam. vii. 1. 18. 1 Chron. xvii. 16.

‡ At the right hand means often at the side of God. (Ps. xci. 7. xvi. 8. 11. cix. 31. 121. 5. God gives him a place of rest and honour on mount Zion, and beside his temple, till he has subdued for him all his foes.

The sceptre of his power abroad,\*

"Be thou king amidst thine enemies.†

Freewill offerings are with thee,

In the day of thy triumph,

Upon my holy mountain.

From the bosom of the dawn, as the dew,

Have I produced thee for myself.‡

Jehovah has sworn and repenteth not.||

"Thou shalt be my priest fowever,

I ordain thee my Melchisedek.§

Jehovah, at thy right hand,¶

Shall crush the kings in the day of his wrath,

\*The sceptre of the king. Jehovah now stretches it out in his name and as his ally upon mount Zion.

†Most of the enemies of David were still unconquered, when he went to Zion, and carried thither the ark of Jehovah.

‡The author has a long note on this passage, which I venture chiefly to omit, as I believe his conjectures have met with no favour among the critics. His rendering is defended mainly by a conjectural alteration of the text. Ta.

||The inviolable covenant, which God made with David, is in 2 Sam. vii. where the words "forever and ever," are often repeated. David himself regards it as a covenant obligation, 2 (Sam. vii. 19.) and so speaks of it in his last words. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.)

§It is well known, that the word here rendered "priest" designates one who might approach near to God, and it would seem, that the nearness of David to God led to its use. But the parrallelism *king of righteousness*, shows clearly enough its meaning. Such originally the priests were to be, and when David brought the ark to Zion he sought to invest them again with that character. (See Ps. cxxxix. 9. How far it was carried we know not, it is enough, that 2 Sam. viii. 18. the sons of David were priests, i. e. judges, and David therefore the highest priest of righteousness, here by a fine allusion called Melchisedek. In the very place, where David resided, this venerable patriarch had once been a priest of righteousness and king of peace.

But what is the expression "after the order"? The parallellism shows, that it is the oath, by which the family of David was raised perpetually to the regal and priestly dignity. It is the same with decree in the 2d, Psalm.

¶The expression here does not relate to rank and dignity, but it is to be taken as in Ps. xvi. 8. 11. Ps xci. 7. and means *by the side*.

Shall sit as judge among the nations—  
 Then shall the land be full of dead bodies,  
 And wounded heads lie far around.  
 He shall drink of the brook in the way,  
 And lift his head again with pride.\*

A beautiful ode! the plan of which need not be hidden or unintelligible to us. It says to David, in his triumphal entry upon mount Zion, that he may now *be at rest* by the dwelling place of Jehovah, and, though encompassed with enemies, reign securely; for God is now at his side, as his covenanted ally, who will sit in judgment among the nations. Clothed with new dignity, he now dwells near to God, who stretches forth for him a sceptre, which all obey. He is now King of righteousness, a priest of God in Salem. What the muses are to Horace, the same are the holy oracles of God to the Hebrew poet.

Vos Cæsarem altum, militia simul  
 Fessa cohortes abdidit oppidis  
 Finire quærentem labores,  
 Pierio recreatis antro.  
 Vos lene consilium et datis et dato  
 Gaudetis almæ.—†

As introduced in the New Testament, also, this Psalm expresses the sense, that a higher king, after toil and suffering, is now *to rest* at the right hand of his heavenly father, until he shall sit in judgment among the nations, and bring all things under his feet.

6. A promise was given to the offspring of David, that it should abide *forever*, that God should *establish* it upon the throne of David its father, and that its prosperity should be *still more widely* extended. We find this promise and the occasion of it historically related,‡ and observe at the same

\*The image is from the history of Samson.

†Lib. 3. Ode 4.

‡2. Sam. vii.

time in how eminent a sense David received this promise.\* He looked upon it as a family league, as a compact after the manner of men,† rendered thanks to God for it, and in his last song‡ still celebrated it, as a covenant respecting his kingdom confirmed by God. This fair and certain prospect is exhibited in the Psalms. God is often reminded of his promise, David is congratulated in regard to this perpetual covenant, and finally the future reign of his lineage is pictured with all the glowing colours of a golden age. Let us look at a proof of this.

### THE LAST SONG OF DAVID.

2 SAM. xxiii. 1—7.

So spake David, the son of Jesse,  
The man, whom God exalted,  
The unointed of the God of Jacob,  
And the sweet Psalmist of Israel.

The Spirit of God speaketh in me,  
His word is on my tongue.  
For thus spake Israel's God,  
Thus said to me the Rock of Israel.  
"A ruler of men, a just prince,||  
A king ruling in the fear of God,  
Shall go forth as the morning dawn,  
And as the rising sun.  
It scattereth the clouds away,  
And from the abundant dews  
Green herbage springs from the earth."

My house stands therefore fast with God. §  
He made with me a covenant forever,  
Well ordered in all things and sure,  
For he is all my salvation, and all my desire.  
But thus shall not the Belials take root,

\* 2. Sam. vii. 18. † 2 Sam. vii. 19. ‡ 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

|| See Briefe das Studium der Theologie betreffend, Th. 1. S. 135.

§ The word usually here read as a particle, is a noun or verb; recte ergo disposite, facto confirmata stat domus mea. *With God* is David's frequent and favourite expression.

They shall be as thorns thrust away,  
 That cannot be taken by the hand.  
 The man, that will touch them,  
 Must arm his hand with sword and spear.  
 The fire shall burn them and their dwelling.

Thus the aged king applied the divine declaration to the rebels, and dissatisfied spirits of his kingdom, whom Solomon also removed out of the way. But the reign of his offspring was not to be wholly in the spirit of revenge.—It was rather to diffuse new life and warmth, as represented in the 72d Psalm, under the same image of the dew and morning sun, which occurs in these last words.

### THE TIMES OF SOLOMON.

#### THE 72d PSALM.

Give to the king thy judgments, O God,  
 And thy tribunal to the king's son.\*  
 He will rule thy people righteously,  
 And protect the oppressed in judgment.

The mountains shall speak peace to the people,  
 The hills proclaim to them righteousness,†  
 That he may aid the oppressed of the people,  
 That he may save the sons of the needy,  
 And break in pieces the oppressor.

So long as sun and moon endure,  
 Shall they fear thee through all generations.‡

He shall come down,  
 As rain upon the mown grass,  
 As showers, that water the earth.  
 In his reign shall the righteous flourish,  
 And happiness abound while the moon endureth.

\* The parallelism shows, that it is intended to congratulate the first, the king.

† Mountains and hills as Ps. ii. cx. The verb is not expressed in the second line.

‡ This would seem to be another voice speaking. The picture presented is a paraphrase of the "forever and ever," that so often occurs in 2 Sam. vii.

His dominion is from sea to sea,\*  
 From the river to the end of the earth.  
 The dwellers in the desert bow before him,†  
 And his enemies lick the dust.  
 The kings of Tarshish and the isles  
 Bring presents to him,‡  
 The kings of Sheba and of Seba,  
 Pay their homage with gifts.||  
 All kings fall down before him,  
 And all nations serve him.

For he helpeth the poor that crieth,  
 And the oppressed, who hath no helper.  
 He spareth the weak and the needy,  
 He saveth the life of the distressed,  
 He delivereth it from deceit and violence,  
 For his blood is precious in his sight.  
 He shall live, and they shall bring him gold of Sheba,  
 They shall pray for him continually,  
 And daily shall they bless him.

In heaps shall the earth produce its corn,  
 Its fruit shall rustle upon the mountains,  
 As the rustling trees of Libanus.  
 The cities shall flourish with people,  
 Like the grass-covered field.

His name shall endure forever,  
 It shall be continued as long as the sun.  
 Men shall bless themselves in his name,§  
 All nations shall bless him.

With this the first Psalms of David close, and they could close with none better. In it the blessings of Abraham, Judah, and David are brought together, and the ideal concep-

\* The parallelism shows, that one sea is the Euphrates, and the other the Mediterranean.

† Arabick and other tribes, whom David had subdued.

‡ Trading nations, not only islands, but the coasts of Europe.

|| Probably Arabia and Ethiopia. The history of the queen of Sheba is known.

§ That is, when they would speak of happy times, they should call them the reign of Solomon.

tions of the Prophets respecting a future reign, like that of Solomon, proceeded from these as their models. In the Psalms, too, when quiet happiness is represented, the name of Solomon characterizes it, and that golden epithalamium in the 45th sings of a righteous sceptre, a peaceful reign, a kindness to the oppressed, in the very style and language of this promise.

Mount Zion also, the seat of the ever flourishing realm of David, accompanied it in like manner to later times. Small as it was, it was to become the chief of the nations ; dry and parched as it was, from it were to flow living streams. From Zion was to go forth the law, and the doctrine, which should bless all nations. For the king of this mountain was to preserve for the earth tranquility, joy, light, and blessedness.

Its foundation is in the holy mountains,  
Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion,  
More than all the dwellings of Israel.

Glorious words are spoken of thee,  
O thou city of God.\* (Change of tone,)

“ Egypt and Babylon will be counted  
To the nation, that acknowledgeth me.

Philistia, Ethiopia, and Tyre  
Shall be as those born there.

To Zion it shall be said,

This and that man were born in her.

The Highest himself hath founded her,  
Jehovah himself counts to her her people,

“ This and that man was born there.”

The princes as well as the least,

All rejoice in her.†

What praise is this, with which in lyric garlands, this city of God, the royal city, is adorned ! All shall come together here, as to its proper home. In it are sacred songs and jubilant dances, in which rich and poor form one responsive

\* The oracle is here introduced, and hence the change of tone.

† The reading of the last lines is doubtful.



**chorus.** We may call to mind many other Psalms, in which Salem is represented, as the city of God, and of an everlasting kingdom, as the head of the nations of the earth, and anticipate the rich development of the Prophets.

**NOTE.** The author inserts here a piece of poetry of several pages, by J.H. Schmid, a German, which I venture to omit. Tr.

## XII.

General view of the period under David and Solomon. What we have still extant from the productions of that period. Influence of these on the writings of the Prophets. By what causes the spirit of the Prophets was awakened and animated. Proofs in respect to Hosea and Isaiah. The new lineage of David and Son of God. Images of royalty. Their origin, and development of their traits from ancient prophecies and Psalms. How the fortunes of David were applied by the Prophets. How Jerusalem and Zion are employed in their figurative language. Specimens. Principle on which they unfolded ancient promises and historical incidents. Difference between the higher and lower economy of God. Comparison of Moses with some other distinguished individuals of biblical history.

Under the reign of David and Solomon Judæa, considered as a kingdom, was in the most flourishing condition, which it ever attained. It extended from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, and from the desert in the South to Mount Libanus. Its kings were respected, and the country enjoyed the advantages of its beautiful situation, even in regard to commerce. The natural consequence was, that the names of these kings became classical in history and poetry for all succeeding times. Their age was alone renowned, so long as kings continued to reign. For these it was now their highest glory, that they sat upon the *throne of David*, and were privileged to call themselves his *sons and successors*. Such they were, but not in regard to his prosperity. For, Solomon alone excepted, (and even his reign scarcely reached the expectations, that were indulged, and by no means to the ideal of the 72d Psalm) the kingdom of David, as a whole, soon went down. It was divided after the death of Solomon, and the smaller part only fell to the family of David. Both kingdoms

were the theatre of commotion and anarchy, and subject to the frequent incursions of their neighbours, until all was lost in the captivity. The species of poetry, therefore, which is the daughter of victory, of tranquility, and prosperity, found no longer an age so splendid and favourable for its production, as it enjoyed under David and Solomon.

It is matter of regret, too, that of the productions of that period nothing remains to us, but the songs of the temple, and such as relate personally to the king and to the kingdom. For it is plain, that the Psalms, and the writings of Solomon are devoted to one or the other of these purposes. The bridal song of the 45th Psalm has only been preserved to us, because it celebrated the praises of a king, and the hopes of his kingdom, out of divine oracles, and was also valued as of a religious character. The Song of Solomon and the Proverbs would not have been preserved, had they not been adorned with the name of Solomon, and had not the later age, when these writings were collected, found in the former already a favourite mystical sense, a description of a future period like the reign of Solomon. As a bridal and love song of any other poet, it would never have been preserved.—We have, therefore, from the most flourishing period of Hebrew poetry but a scanty remnant, such as could be saved in the general wreck of the captivity, by reverence for the names of their ancient kings, their religion, and the history of the kingdom. The voice of the bridegroom and the bride,\* those joyous songs of the harvest and the vintage,† of which mention is so often made, are no longer extant. The voice of the grinder at the mill,‡ and of other kinds of employment, is silent, and all the daughters of musick are sleeping in the dust. As an emerald set in gold, so is the melody of musick with festive wine,|| but it is heard no more. The joy and mirth of their rural feasts are swept away from their fields, and we hear no more the

\* Jer. vii. 34.

† Isa. ix. 3. Jer. xxv. 10.

‡ Eccl. xii. 4.

|| Sirach xxvii. 5.

*hedad*, the jubilant cry of the wine treader in his song.\* How unfair is it then, to compare the poetry of this people, as a whole, with that of other nations, when we have but one or two branches of the tree, the poetry connected with religious worship, and that relating to the king, or what was considered as such. The remainder was not collected, or was lost.

But as the songs of Moses, so the Psalms, as illustrative of these, had a great influence on later times. They were (probably at first only to the 72d psalm) the song book of the nation, or at least of the temple and of the Prophets. In looking at the individual characters of the latter, we shall see how closely they adhered to the language of the sanctuary, and how richly they paraphrased them in their animated appeals. It will now be my purpose only to show in general the influence which the so called Messiah or royal psalms have had on the voices of the Prophets; and I say in a word, *that these, together with the ancient prophecies, have not only awakened the voice of the Prophets, but the rich and expanded views of these latter are obviously the development of the former.*

1. To the offspring of David were given by divine declarations great promises respecting an *everlasting kingdom*, a *new establishment* of it, and a *future period of great happiness and prosperity*. As then the kingdom, through the fault of Solomon, Rehoboam, and other kings, was sunk into a low condition, when God at length awoke the voice of the Prophets, what could they say to the people other than "ye are fallen and debased." What else could Hosea say to the kingdom of Israel, but "turn again to the righteous Jehovah, for ye have gone astray. Instead of going to the calves, go into the deserts of Judah, to the temple of him to whom ye belong, he will meet you, and receive you graciously."†

I will betroth thee unto me forever,†

\* Jer. xlviii. 33. † Hos. ii. 14. xiv. ii. ‡ Hos. ii. 19.

I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness,  
 In judgment, in loving kindness, and mercy.  
 In faithfulness will I betroth thee,  
 And thou shall again acknowledge Jehovah,

It is the wish of the Prophet, that Israel and Judah should again become one kingdom, and he represents the re-union under the symbol of a marriage. This sentiment pervades his whole Prophecy, and is of political import. He allures them with a voice of friendship back to the wilderness of Judah, to the House of God, and the family of David,\* that they too may enjoy the blessings, which were promised that line of kings. For all the more ancient blessings of Abraham, of Judah, and Moses, were confirmed by the divine declarations and the Psalms to the offspring of David. He foresees, also, future times of happiness, in which

The erring children of Israel return,  
 Add seek Jehovah, their God, and David, their king,  
 And honour Jehovah, and his fatherly kindness,  
 In the latter days.

So spake a Prophet of Israel, and the sages in the kingdom of Judah must still more clearly unfold their views concerning these ancient blessings, and ordinances of the realm. When Israel was often laid waste, and even now was on the point of being carried away captive, God awoke in the scarcely more happy Judah the voices of many Prophets at once, which the spirit of Isaiah was probably instrumental, if not in originally calling forth, at least in animating and encouraging. They saw the fate of their sister kingdom, the greatest part of the nation, they felt their own misery, and turned themselves back for encouragement to those Prophecies, which God had given concerning the race and lineage of David. The stock of David stood contemned, small, and almost dried up; but with strong

\* Hosea ii. 11. vi. 1.

faith in the inviolable word of God, and the oath, which he had sworn to David, they saw a new shoot arise from its root, and to that they applied all the blessings, which God had pronounced in ancient times. This is the key to Isaiah's first images.

### THE NEW LINEAGE OF DAVID.\*

Behold ! Jehovah, Jehovah Sabaoth,  
Smites off the branch with fearful crash,  
The lofty trunks are hewn down,  
The proudly exalted are humbled,  
The thick forest is cut down with the axe,  
The groves of Libanus by a mighty arm.

But a new branch springs from the stem of Jesse,  
A shoot shall grow up from his roots,  
And the spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him,  
The spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
The spirit of prudence and of heroism,  
The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah,  
And cause him to breath in the fear of Jehovah.

He judgeth not by the sight of the eye,  
Nor decideth by the hearing of the ear.  
He giveth judgment to the poor uprightly,  
Avengeth with equity the oppressed,  
And smiteth the land with his royal word,  
With the breath of his lips he slayeth the wicked,  
With righteousness he girdeth his loins,  
And faithfulness is the girdle of his reins.—  
And then shall the root of Jesse  
Become as the banner of the (ancient) tribe,  
For which the nations shall enquire,  
And count it glorious to enjoy the rest it gives.

It would be strange, if every one, acquainted with the ancient Prophecies respecting Judah and the lineage of David, did not recognise in every trait the development of their ex-

\* Isa. x. 33. xi. 1—10.

pressions and images. The staff of Judah is known from the blessing of Jacob, and grew into the royal sceptre of David. Now it is dried up to the root, and the Prophet sees a new shoot spring forth, which becomes again a leader, and an army banner, as Judah was once destined to be. The nations enquire after it, and consider its protection, honor, safety, and tranquility; as formerly the nations were to depend on Judah for support. All the attributes of the future monarch are from the history of Solomon, and the blessings pronounced upon him. He was renowned for his wisdom, and the future Solomon is to excel him sevenfold in wisdom and divine gifts. The pictures of the righteousness of his reign are from the Psalms, which relate to Solomon, as well as the beautiful picture of a golden age under his dominion, which immediately follows the above, and which I have not translated. Even the peculiar expression, "to breath or smell in the fear of Jehovah," seems to have been occasioned by the oracular language in the last words of David.\* The Prophet unfolded the ancient oracles, and combined them into an image, that might awaken and confirm the faith of his people. I add here in like manner another passage, which has been misinterpreted, or thought obscure, only perhaps because its relation to the ancient Psalms and historical incidents was not observed.†

They pass distressed and hungry through the land,  
And in their hunger fret themselves,  
And curse their God and king.  
They look toward heaven, and toward the earth,  
But darkness and distress are over all,

\* According to this a ruler was promised, who should rule in the fear of God. Isaiah who is fond of paranomasia has put together several like words.

† Isa. viii. 21—ix. 7.

Thick darkness, and redoubled night.\*

No dimness now, where late thick darkness reigned,  
 Like those old times, when he in Zebulon  
 And Naphthali at first threw off the yoke.  
 He renders glorious in the latter days  
 The country by the sea beyond the Jordan,  
 The anarchy of nations.  
 The people that were walking in darkness,  
 Behold a great light.  
 The dwellers in the land of blackest night,  
 On them hath light shone forth.

The people are increased, and great too is their joy.†  
 They joy before thee like the joy of harvest,  
 As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

For thou didst break their heavy yoke,  
 The rod which smote their shoulders,  
 The sceptre of their oppressors,  
 As in the time of Midian.

The Prophet could not have said more distinctly, at what he aimed in every thing, and from whence his images were drawn. These were from the times of Midian, and therefore from the victorious times of the Judges. At that period in the North part of the country a great deliverance was wrought.‡ Then in the obscure forests of Naphthali and Zebulon the light of freedom went forth over all the land. So now also in this Northern press of nations; in the way along the sea of Galilee, where now the hostile Syrians are exercising their oppressions, the light of freedom is going forth, and there shall be joy and jubilee, like that of the song of Deborah.

\* It is the method of Isaiah to contrast the present and melancholy with the future and happy condition, and these must be taken together here, though in different chapters.

† I take the particle here for the interjection, expressing a wish, and a feeling of joy, *utinam*, *O si!* as it often occurs.

‡ Jud. iv. 5. In Harosheth i. e. the forest of nations, as now in Galilee, in the heaped up, confused nations, which pressed upon them from above.



For all the weapons of tumultuous war.  
 And all the warriors harness, dipped in blood,  
 Shall now be burned, as fuel for the flame—

For unto us a king is born,  
 And unto us a son is given.  
 The staff shall be upon his shoulder,  
 His name is called, *the wonderful*,  
 The counsellor, the mighty hero,  
 My father to eternity,  
 The prince of peace.

Could the Prophet indicate his purpose in any way more distinctly? He does not surely speak of a Hezekiah, or of his son, as if he were writing a birth-day ode, but of a king, who should bear all the names and blessings of the offspring of David, and bring the promised golden age. He is called therefore, *son*, and *begotten*, i. e. the begotten of God, an expression already consecrated by the Psalms. The *Sceptre*, which Judah bore before his feet, he lays *upon his shoulder*—and thus in him revives Judah, the ancient prince of the tribes. His name is called *wonderful*! and so David often called himself, when as the stone, that was rejected, he had now become the corner stone.\* So the angel called himself, who announced the birth of Sampson.† He is called *counsellor* and *mighty hero*, for Isaiah usually couples the two together to intimate, that he is to be prudent in counsel, and mighty in deeds, as was remarked in treating of the pre-previous prophecy. *My father henceforth forever* he calls him also, and does not venture even to change the grammatical peculiarity of person, which often stands in the Psalms and benedictions, “he shall call me, my father! and I will establish his kingdom forever.”‡ Finally *prince of peace*, as the name of Solomon imports, and as the Psalms explain it. The Prophet compresses into the names all which he could

\* Ps. cxviii. 22, 23. † Jud. xiii. 18, ‡ Ps. lxxxix. 27. 2 Sam. vii 14.

bring together concerning the blessings and the glory of the offspring of David.

And great shall his dominion be,  
 And endless peace shall reign  
 Upon the throne of David in his kingdom,  
 That he may order and establish it,  
 With righteousness and judgment  
 From henceforth and forevermore.  
 The zeal of Jehovah Sabaoth  
 Will perform this.

That is zeal for his own honour, for all these words were promises of God respecting the lineage of David, which are here repeated.

I cannot indulge myself in a description of the golden age, which the Prophets connect with the reign of this new king, the general amount of the whole is however, that he was to be a shepherd like David, a peaceful prince like Solomon, a righteous judge, a mighty hero, and a restorer of the fear of Jehovah. The presence of Jehovah, his righteousness, goodness and saving efficacy were to be manifested in him, and he was to be addressed with the acclamation, *Jehovah our righteousness, Jehovah our helper*. In treating of the Prophets we shall enquire concerning the origin of these denominations, and it will appear, that among them, before and during the captivity, the name of *a king*, of *a new David*, was used. Afterwards, when the government was divided between the prince and the high-priest, Zechariah saw the two anointed ones stand before the throne of Jehovah.\* Now therefore the representation of the shoot from the stock of David became also a form, though varying according to the circumstances of the time. He was to build the temple of the Lord like Solomon, and in the temple to bear the magnificent apparel of the high priest. He was to reign on the throne established by Jehovah, but also to

\* Zech. 4. xiv.

be a priest upon his throne, and peace was to be between them.<sup>1</sup> Finally Malachi returns to the most ancient economy, and brings back Moses and Elias, the ancient messengers of God, who has established the covenant in their purifying spirit.—Thus the prophecy always clothed itself in the costume of the age; while there were kings, it adhered for the most part to the promise in relation to a king, which is celebrated in the 89th Psalm.

I sing the mercies of Jehovah forever,  
 I will proclaim with my mouth  
 Thy faithfulness from age to age.  
 And say, for us shall grace be ever sure,  
 Thy words shall be established like the heavens.  
 "For I confirmed a covenant with my chosen,  
 I swore to David my servant,  
 Thy seed will I establish forever,  
 And build thy throne from age to age."  
 The heavens bear witness to thy wondrous work,  
 The assembly of saints praise thy faithfulness.

This did the Prophets, they named the future king, *the servant of God, David*.

2. Still farther, they develope in him the fortunes of David and of the seed, which was promised him. David himself was doomed to suffer much, before he could establish his extensive kingdom, and the other was to be chastened with the rod of men,<sup>†</sup> though the favour of Jehovah his father should not wholly depart from him, and both the suffering and triumph were applied by the Prophets, amidst all the calamities, which they witnessed, to the future king and his kingdom.—This is the key to the remarkable and apparently contradictory representations of the Prophets. The 22d, and all the Psalms of David, descriptive of his afflictions, were unfolded, and consolation given to oppressed and suffering Israel by the consider-

<sup>1</sup>2 Sam. vii. 14.   <sup>†</sup>Zech. vi. 12. 13.

ation, that, as it was the fate of their glorious ancestor in this way to attain his elevation, so it must be theirs, and that of their future king, through oppression and suffering to be exalted to dignity and honour. We accordingly find in the Prophets frequent applications of that class of David's Psalms mentioned above.

I place here, as an appendix, the leading Psalm of this class which the Prophets gradually unfolded more and more, and, with which they sought to comfort their depressed people; the Psalm, with the first expressions of which the most exalted sufferer expressed his deep anguish upon the cross.

### I. THE SUFFERER.

A LAMENTATION, Ps. XXII. 1—23.\*

TO THE CHIEF MUSICIAN, AT THE DAWN OF MORNING,

A PSALM OF DAVID.

My God, my God ! wherefore dost thou forsake me ?  
 Why art thou far from helping me, and from my cry ?  
 My God, by day I call, but thou hearest not,  
 I cry by night, and find no time of rest !  
 And yet art thou the adorable one,  
 Who is enthroned amid the praises of Israel.†  
 In thee our fathers trusted,  
 They trusted, and thou didst save them,  
 They cried to thee, and were delivered,  
 Trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

But I am but a worm, and no man,  
 Contemned of men, the people's scorn.  
 All they, that see me, scoff at me,

\* By the sufferer here described, has been understood, sometimes David, then Hezekiah, the whole Jewish nation, then again, an unknown king, or hero, unsuccessfully contending with barbarous foes, and finally the Jewish Messiah. A minute description even of the last sufferings of Christ have been sought for by some in the several traits in this Psalm. This is not the place to go into a discussion of these various views. I may do it, perhaps, on another occasion.

† In the sanctuary, where songs of praise were sung to Jehovah.

They pout the lips, and shake the head.  
 "He calls upon Jehovah, let him save him,  
 Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

Yet thou didst take me from my mother's womb,  
 And wast my hope upon my mother's breasts.  
 While laid upon the lap, I hung on thee,  
 And from my mother's womb thou wast my God !  
 Be therefore, even now, not far from me,  
 For trouble comes, and there is none to help !

Many bulls have compassed me about,  
 Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.\*  
 They rushed with open mouth upon me,  
 Like ravening and roaring lions.  
 Like water am I poured out,  
 And all my bones are loosed.  
 My heart is melted like wax within me,†  
 My strength dried up like a potsherd.  
 My tongue too cleaveth to the roof of my mouth,  
 And thou hast laid me in the dust of death  
 Dogs have encompassed me around,‡  
 And gangs of wicked men enclose me,  
 They pierce my hands and feet.  
 I might count over all my bones,  
 They see it, and with joy they gaze upon me.  
 They even now divide my garments,  
 And cast lots upon my vesture.||

But be not thou, Jehovah, far from me,  
 My strong deliverer, haste and help me,

\* The image of a powerful and enraged enemy. The bullocks of Bashan were distinguished by their strength and wildness. In the opinion of some commentators, there is an allusion here to the region, from which the enemy came, who threatened the royal Psalmist.

† A vivid image of a relaxation and sinking of all the energies.

‡ An image not unusual in the East of swarming and piratical enemies. Dogs running loose without masters are even more bloodthirsty than wolves.

|| They are so sure of my death, as already in thought to divide my possessions.

Deliver my life from the sword,\*  
 My soul† from the power of the dog.  
 Rescue me from the lion's mouth,  
 And save me from the bullock's horns,‡  
 Among my brethren then will I extol thee,  
 And praise thee in the congregation.

## II. THE SUFFERER DELIVERED.

PSALM XXII. 24—32.||

Ye, that fear Jehovah, praise him!  
 All ye offspring of Jacob, glorify him,  
 And reverence him, ye seed of Israel,  
 For he contemneth not nor despiseth  
 The mournful cry of the afflicted,  
 Nor hath he hid his face from him,  
 But when he cried to him, he heard.

My song shall praise thee in the congregation,  
 Before thy servants will I pay my vows.  
 Eat, and be satisfied, ye humble sufferers,  
 Ye, that seek him, praise Jehovah,  
 Your heart shall be revived forever,§  
 And all inhabitants of the earth,  
 Remembering shall turn to Jehovah,  
 And all the tribes of men worship him.  
 For to Jehovah doth the kingdom pertain,  
 And he is ruler among the nations.

\* The sufferer here is anxious to be assured of the interposition of Jehovah, and does not yield himself to the death, that is threatened, so willingly as the dying Saviour.

† My darling, my dearest part, my life, my soul.

‡ Literally the wild ox or buffalo, an image of powerful and enraged enemies.

|| This *second* part of the Psalm has a very different tone and character from the first, and is neither so powerful in language, nor rich in sentiment. In the circumstances of the case we should naturally expect it to be otherwise, and many commentators consider this a distinct Psalm, designed to accompany the offering of sacrifice.

§ Rich and poor partook of the sacrificial feasts.

Let them that eat the fat of the earth, worship him,  
 And them, that are humble, bow before him,  
 Whose souls are vexed with care !\*  
 The future generations shall revere him,  
 And shall be counted as his people.  
 They come to make his kindness known,  
 And what he hath performed, to future times !—

3. Zion and Jerusalem also passed into the Prophets invested with the character, which had been given them in the Psalms. The residence of the most renowned of the ancient kings was to be the yet more magnificent seat of a future king, still more glorious than David, who should reign in Zion, as the peculiar representative of Jehovah.

Arise, be light ! for thy light cometh †  
 Jehovah's glory goeth forth upon thee.  
 Lo ! darkness covereth the earth,  
 And deep obscurity the nations !

But upon thee Jehovah goeth forth,  
 His glory now is visible upon thee,  
 And all the nations come to thy light,  
 And kings to the brightness, that riseth on thee.

Lift up thine eyes around and see,  
 They all assemble themselves, and come to thee  
 Thy sons are come from far,  
 From far they bring to thee thy daughters.

Then shalt thou see, and rejoice,  
 Thy heart shall leap, and be exalted,  
 When the tumultuous sea shall turn to thee,  
 And nations bring to thee their wealth.

The caravans of camels cover thee,  
 The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah.  
 All they from Sheba come,  
 They bring thee gold and incense,  
 And praise the glory of Jehovah.

The flocks of Kedar are assembled unto thee,  
 The rams of Nebaioth are made to serve thee,

\* Rich and poor, joyous and sad, i. e. all men should honour Jehovah.

† By the side, on the border, or distant, as the parallelism requires.

They come acceptably upon mine altar,  
 And I will glorify the house of my glory.  
 Who are these, that fly as clouds,  
 And as the doves, that flock to their houses?  
 For now the isles are waiting my command,  
 And ships of Tarshish are made ready,  
 To bring thy sons from distant lands.

Their silver and their gold with them,  
 Devoted to the glory of Jehovah,  
 The holy God of Israel, who glorifieth thee.

The sons of strangers build thy walls,  
 Their kings shall minister unto thee,  
 For in my wrath I smote thee,  
 But in my favour have I mercy on thee.

Thy gates shall be continually open,  
 Nor day nor night shall they be closed,  
 To bring to thee the riches of the nations,  
 And that their kings too may be brought.

Let one read the 22d, 72d, 87th, 102d and other Psalms, and compare them with this passage, and he will at once perceive, that expressions in them respecting the coming of foreigners to Jerusalem, worshipping there, and being accounted as natives, are here merely unfolded, though with the greatest richness and beauty. The nations and regions named by the Prophet are the very same, too, which occur in the Psalm concerning Solomon.\*

So it is with Zion, the dwelling place of God, and the peculiar crown of the country. What the festival and national Psalms sung of present circumstances, the Prophets applied to adorn their views of the future period of the reign of Jehovah. There, in that expected day, this little mountain was to be exalted, its diminutive brook become a river, and water the parched desert.—It is absurd to suppose, that the Prophets meant all this to be taken in its literal and sensuous import, as if Mount Zion was suddenly to swell to a giant range, and all

\* Compare Isa. lx. 6. 7. 13. with Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. 16.



the brass and iron of the temple become gold and silver. So soon as we know, whence they derived these figurative representations, that they did not invent them themselves and to please their own fancy, but pictured their conceptions, and sketched their hopes in the ancient known language of national songs and national hopes, we shall cease to think of such sensuous interpretations, which to a great extent are self-contradictory, and at the same time shall be as far removed at least from their opposite, the obscure abyss of mysticism. We shall see how they, as men of sound understanding, and as the divine sages of their nation, did what all true philosophers do with the works of God in nature.

These observe, and analyze, study the laws, the course, and ultimate tendency of the phænomena of nature, and in like manner they fixed their attention on *the covenant of Jehovah, their ever true and faithful God*, considered his declarations, unfolded the import of his words, studied ancient customs and the character of individuals, accommodated the incidents of more ancient times to their own age and saw in both the germs of the future already beginning to unfold. The Spirit of Jehovah was their guide, for their visions were not unmeaning raptures, but calm predictions, determinations and prospective views, in accordance with a new series, *ordained in higher dignity*.

This seems to me, to be the true link of connexion in the writings of the Prophets, and the best key to their hidden treasures. While we consider, whence they derived these images, for what end they used them, to what period, and under what new form, each applied his own, we draw, as it were, with them from the same consecrated fountains, and fly as they did, like bees in all directions, and extract our sweets from every flower of the ancient world. The rich garden of ancient divine oracles, in history, in the benedictions and Psalms, in our present position lie behind us, the collected

and elaborated flowers of the Prophetick books before us, a beautiful and instructive prospect.

And when we observe step by step, how always the thoughts of God are higher, than the mere human conceptions of even the wisest favourites of heaven ; how all these saw only in their own sphere, and, even in the light of Divine inspiration, could conceive of the future only according to the measure of their own experience, while he, however, went on with his own infinite designs, and from their words and views often unfolded conceptions, which had probably never entered their narrow minds ; how clearly do we see the difference between the *higher economy* and purposes of God, and that *lower economy*, which falls under our immediate observation !

It is undoubtedly true, as expressed in the eulogy upon Moses attached to the close of his history, that "there arose not a Prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face," for in the whole period, which we have passed through we find none, who will bear a comparison with him. Samuel had a ray of his light, but not his power ; he could not raise up the fallen state, much less bring it back to the unattained conceptions of Moses. David had sensibility and delicacy, uprightness and heroism ; but he was a king. Instead of the publick good, the more limited good of his own family occupied his mind. He encircled the Mosaic law with a lyrical garland, but could not increase its permanent safeguards, and still less establish it upon a deeper foundation. The wisdom of Solomon passed into luxurious refinement, the splendour and pomp of a royal court, while the economy of the state was in the mean time broken up. Of those, who came at a later period, Elijah had an arm like Moses, but his age was too deeply sunk ; he purified like the fire and the wind, but he could not give stability and life. Isaiah and other Prophets could speak like Moses ; they were animated by his spirit and his clear sightedness, but where is the work which they accomplished ? the political edifice,

which they left behind them? Moses left it in a form distinctly conceived and carried into effect with an arm that never tired. His original plan, to build to God an altar of stone, and appoint the first born throughout the land to serve him, was the most simple and sublime, that has been found in any system of national worship; and this the Prophets with more spiritual views picture forth only for a future age. When Moses was compelled to yield to his sensuous and rebellious people, who were throughout inclined to worship the golden calf, how pure a conception did he produce in the tabernacle, the tent of the divine lawgiver moving with the movements of a wandering people!—The idea of the most holy place, with its unapproachable mystery, containing only the tables of the law, which it preserved beneath the wings of the mysterious symbol, is so simply sublime, that nothing can be altered or added without desecrating and debasing it. Its holy place had nothing but the shew-bread, the symbol of the most ancient family sacrifices, which were merely feasts. Here stood the most simple feast before the eyes of Jehovah. In front of it burnt the seven lamps, the symbol of his omniscience, and before that again the golden altar sent up its clouds of incense, the symbol of prayer from the most ancient times. That, which properly constituted the temple, contained nothing more. The blood of expiation, and that offered as an acknowledgment of tenure and allegiance, flowed only in the outer court, and how wisely were all these rights adapted to the welfare of the state? How well defined were his laws! and how unweariedly did he labour to improve them! and notwithstanding all the hindrances, which might have discouraged the most resolute, never abandoned the purpose of his life. Even at the last he collected the energies of his spirit, re-ordained his system, and died as a lawgiver, who knew his country, and skilfully adapted his institutions to it. How wise and judicious too was the plan of his Exodus from Egypt! Even the sea formed a path for him, which served at

the same time for a wall, through which his people could not return. Finally what courage, and what a spirit must belong to the man, who in a barren desert could control, cultivate, and soften a rebellious multitude of 600,000 men! Truly *there arose since no Prophet in Israel like Moses*; the arm of the most powerful of them was but the finger of Moses, and the most enlightened of them only reflected the glory of his countenance.

Before thee only do I bow myself, thou heavenly form, more exalted, than Moses, the more beautiful, as thou wast more benign; the more powerful, as thou didst more conceal thy power. With twelve poor, rude and unlearned disciples thou didst accomplish more than Moses with his mighty host, and found a *kingdom of heaven*, the only kingdom, that from its nature can endure forever. For the whole world it was established by thee, but only with the smallest beginning. The seed was planted in the earth, which still is growing, and expanding to diffuse at length that reviving shade, to which all the Prophets point their predictions, of the future. Endued with heavenly powers, thou didst come down to the earth, and find the predictions of the Prophets meet in thee, with courage to fulfil even those of severest import, by poverty, by suffering, and by the most shameful death, because in this way only could they be fulfilled. Moses and Elias, the divinest heroes of the ancient world, conversed with thee upon the holy mount, with thee the third, the greatest, and most benign of all. Thou hast accomplished thine advent, hast accomplished and wilt accomplish all the predictions of the Prophets in that work, which, though invisibly, is still and ever progressive. It is the sole work of its kind ever accomplished in the world, one which no sage, no mighty hero could ever accomplish, and whose consequences reach beyond the boundaries of time. The beautiful regions of the Prophets will conduct us on our way to that kingdom, which he hath established, and towards which we are now advancing.

## REMAINDER

## OF THE FIRST EDITOR.

The continuation of this work, greatly as the author delighted in the employment, and often as he anticipated its prosecution, unhappily never appeared. He wished for a season of leisure to be devoted to it, but it never came. Only a few leaves of the commencement of the third part were found among his papers, which however I would not willingly suffer to be lost, especially as they contain a recapitulation of what has been said in the previous parts, and a brief sketch of the remainder, which was to be concluded in the third part. The following is the fragment referred to.

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We have now so far prepared the ground, that we may contemplate to advantage the growth and expansion of that tree of Israelitish hopes and prophetic anticipations, on which the poetry of the Prophets put forth its flowers. From their patriarch Abraham downward, the nation indulged the prospect, that through their race all the nations of the earth were to receive some great and signal blessing. The shepherd race went down to Egypt, the patriarch of the twelve tribes turned even his dying eyes to the land, where they were destined to dwell, and arranged as it were a prophetic chart of their dwelling places; but he died, and Joseph, the prince among his brethren, also died. The people sunk into a state of bondage, and almost abandoned the hope even of their own deliverance, much more of being instrumental in blessing all other nations. Moses at length delivered them from bondage, improved with great labour the rude character of the nation, received an earnest of their future conquest, saw the land of promise, and died. His painful labours had been limited within a narrow circle. He was obliged to destroy a few inconsiderable states, but the world at large could not feel his

beneficial influence. Israel, after his death, but imperfectly conquered the promised land, and for a long period was oppressed and reduced to a condition of misery, now by this, and now by that neighboring people, until a lion of the tribe of Judah arose, and being satiated with the spoil of nations reposed himself upon mount Zion, one of the fruits of his triumphs. A star went forth from Jacob, a sceptre was raised up in Israel, which smote the heads of Moab, made conquest of Edom, dispersed and overran the Amalekites, the Kenites, and similar tribes. So long as he lived, no one dared fully to arouse the lion, though they ventured in some degree to excite him. But he died, and his royal mind in the anticipation of death was filled with care respecting the future interests of his kingdom. Hence God gave him the promise, not only that his son should sit upon his throne, and reign with undisturbed sway but that a successive series of his descendants should bear the sceptre. This declaration of God elevated his hopes, and animated his heart. It is not only celebrated in several Psalms, as a divine oracle respecting the future interests of the country and the royal family, but the dying king even in his last song encircles his temples with this unfading laurel.\*

With hostile feelings he there reflected upon the malcontents of his kingdom, on whom he had tried every kindness in vain, and whom he considered unfit and undeserving subjects of farther clemency. But with so much the greater joy did he reflect on the covenant in relation to his own family, which God had established with him, from which the figurative expressions in this last song are taken, and which is celebrated also in the 72d, 89th and 122d, Psalms.

Such were the germs, from which the tree of prophetic poetry grew up; the benedictions bestowed upon Abraham, Judah, and David, and since the two former seemed also coin-

\*2 Sam. xxiii. 1. See above in the XI section.

cident to this most victorious, prosperous, and at the same time religious prince, since by his reign, his arrangement of divine worship, but especially by his Psalms, he formed a marked epoch, it was in the nature of things, that his age, especially as delineated in his Psalms, should both for the Prophets, who formed themselves according to the spirit of these songs, and for the people, who sung them, and recalled the events of that period with pride, become as it were the ideal and model of that, which with more splendour they pictured as still future. The blessing of Abraham was only in very general terms; too comprehensive, and too spiritual to admit of particular representation. Moses was too far removed from them, though they took from him for their use all the miracles of the divine interposition, both in Egypt and in the desert, together with the Shechinah. David presented to them a character more glorious, and better known; for the people were now accustomed to notions of royalty. The mutual jealousies of the tribes had ceased, when most of the Prophets wrote, the ten tribes were already in captivity, and a small branch of Judah with the royal stock of David was all that remained. To this therefore tended the current of prophecy, and here the streams flowed together. The views of Jacob and Balaam, the victories, the reign, the piety of David, expressed in his Psalms, the promise of an endless period of peace and happiness under his posterity, who should succeed him upon the throne—all these circumstances were connected with him, and associated him in their minds with their glowing conceptions of the future. He is often styled in the Psalms the son of Jehovah, the first born of God, and was enthroned near the dwelling place of God upon his holy mountain. He brought nations into subjection, had a cultivated taste for musick and poetry, and a regard for right, and spake of himself in his relation to God with humility and self-abasement. His posterity were to enjoy a peaceful kingdom, and his seed to reign so long as sun and moon should endure,

throughout all generations. Judah, therefore, David, Solomon, and their perpetual successors, were represented in the times of the future anointed. Human imagination and poetry can operate in no other way. Even higher divine intuitions can be expressed by them only under known images and signs, and thus the poetry of the Jews naturally employed in its representations the treasures of imagery, which it had, and especially from the most splendid era of the national history.

Let us look then at the course embraced in the third part, on which we are now to enter. After inquiries respecting the political productions ascribed to Solomon, comes the true and characteristick spirit of Hebrew poetry in the writings of the Prophets. We shall contemplate the individual characters of the Prophets, their favourite conceptions and views, together with the circumstances of the age, which served to produce them. The various and distinct colourings given to the imprecations and predictions relating to other nations will be carefully considered. We shall then examine the change produced in their conceptions by the captivity, the altered character of the imagery and figurative language, which now appeared—and so down to the apocryphal writings, in so far as these, as for example the fourth book of Ezra, have the characters of poetry. Finally in the last book of the New Testament as if by regeneration of all the conceptions and images of the ancient Prophets, a new poetical shoot springs up; and at once expands into a tree, blooming with fresh and unfading flowers.



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